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AUTHOR Mei, Dolores M.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of the Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) program as it operated in 26 selected New York (New York) public high schools in 1986-87 raises serious questions about the effectiveness of the program. A minimum of 50 percent of the participants were to achieve the following objectives: (1) improve attendance; (2) pass at least one more subject than in 1985-86; (3) earn sufficient credits to advance to the next grade; and (4) if in the ninth grade or below in the baseline years of 1985-86, still be in school three years later. Data were analyzed from student rosters, interviews with staff, a student questionnaire, and classroom observations. Findings show that A.I.D.P. participants as a whole did not meet any of the objectives. However, most students receiving services for the full time of the program did meet some of the objectives, and students who received all available services for the full time (core students) in particular made gains in attendance and courses passed. Statistical data are displayed in five figures and eight tables. Appendices include the following: (1) descriptions of schools; (2) summary of logs maintained during March 16-20, 1986; (3) data collection and file preparation procedures; (4) school-by-school summary of students served; (5) school-by-school summary of attendance and achievement improvement; (6) mean attendance for core and transitional students. (FMW)

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HIGH SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT
DROPOUT PREVENTION
(A.I.D.P.) PROGRAM
1986 - 1987
END-OF-YEAR REPORT

OEA Evaluation Report

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Evaluation Section Report
Robert Tobias, Administrator
John E. Schoener, Senior Manager

April, 1988

HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT DROPOUT PREVENTION (A.I.D.P.) PROGRAM 1986 - 1987 END-OF-YEAR REPORT

Prepared by the O.E.A.
High School Evaluation Unit

Dolores M. Mei
Evaluation Manager

Jan Rosenblum
Evaluation Assistant

Mabel Payne
Mary Lou McGanney
Evaluation Associates

Carol J. Meyer
Evaluation Consultant

New York City Public Schools
Office of Educational Assessment
Richard Guttenberg, Director

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HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT DROPOUT PREVENTION
(A.I.D.P.) PROGRAM
1986 - 1987

EVALUATION SUMMARY

This final report examines the Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) program as it operated in 26 selected New York City public high schools in 1986-87--its second full year of operation in the present format. The report describes the program structure and participants; discusses program implementation; analyzes attendance, courses passed, and promotion rates for student participants; and presents conclusions and recommendations. Data were obtained from student rosters distributed to each of the A.I.D.P. schools in October, 1986, February, 1987, and June, 1987; interviews with A.I.D.P. and school staff members; a student questionnaire; and classroom observations.

A.I.D.P. students as a whole did not meet any of the program objectives. However, in most cases, full-year students did meet the program objectives, and core full-year students in particular made gains in attendance and courses passed from the previous year.

The program evaluation also revealed that few A.I.D.P.-served students are making significant progress toward earning a high school diploma within a reasonable period of time. Most students are earning only about one-half of the credits needed to be promoted to the next grade in a single year, and many A.I.D.P.-served students are earning credits at a much lower rate. Given these findings, it is almost more surprising that these students persist in their efforts to succeed in high school than that large numbers of them are very likely never to attain that success.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The structure of the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program was similar to that used the previous year. It included six components: 1) facilitating services to students, 2) attendance outreach, 3) guidance and counseling services, 4) health services, 5) school-level linkages, and 6) alternative educational services. These components could be implemented in one of three models: Project SOAR, a fully-designed school-based program in which "families" of 20 to 25 students were block-programmed for some of their classes; strategies, in which individual schools could structure their A.I.D.P. program around a particular focus or theme, and utilize a community-based organization to deliver some portion of their A.I.D.P. services; and Operation Success, a work-readiness and training program developed by Federation Employment and Guidance Services (FEGS) in cooperation with the Board of Education. All A.I.D.P. schools were to serve a minimum

of 150 students in their program; in addition, Operation Success schools were to provide a number of additional students with job-readiness training, as specified in a contract with the Board of Education.

However, certain programmatic changes were made for the 1986-87 school year. As previously, 100 of the 150 students in the program received all program services, including alternative educational services; however, in 1986-87, these "core" students were more extensively block-programmed. The program for the remaining 50 students was expanded to include two block-programmed A.I.D.P. classes, and a greater emphasis was placed on including students who had previously participated in A.I.D.P. but were no longer eligible on the basis of attendance in this "transitional" program.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

All but one of the 26 schools participating in the 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program also participated in the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program; Eli Whitney High School was undergoing redesign, and was replaced by Automotive High School in the 1986-87 program. Seven of the schools continued to use the strategies model, three again used the Operation Success model, and the remaining schools, including Automotive High School, utilized the Project SOAR model.

The total served population for the 1986-87 school year was 5,254. Twenty-one percent of these students were entering high school from middle school, compared with 14 percent the previous year. Approximately one-half of these students were ninth-graders, about 35 percent were tenth-graders, and slightly more than five percent were special education students; the remaining students were eleventh- and twelfth-graders. Less than two percent were identified as being limited English proficient (LEP). Eighty-four percent of the students who were not in special education were overage for their grade, and most of them were not earning credits at a rate that would allow them to graduate from high school in four years.

The majority (55 percent) of the students participated in Project SOAR schools, 22 percent received services in strategies schools, and the remaining students attended O.S. schools. Project SOAR schools served a higher proportion of ninth-graders than schools using the other two program models. As expected, about two-thirds of the students served in SOAR and strategies schools received core services and one-third received transitional services. By contrast, the percentage of students receiving core services in O.S. schools ranged from 30 to 85 percent, due to differences in the way that O.S. facilitators interpreted program guidelines regarding block programming. About 90 percent of the core students and 60 percent of the

transitional students in SOAR and strategies schools were selected for service on the basis of their attendance the previous year or term, while only 60 percent of the core students and 40 percent of the transitional students in O.S. schools were selected for service on the basis of their attendance.

Roughly 29 percent of the students enrolled in A.I.D.P. were discharged during the program year. Most discharges from the program were due to transfers to another school or program. About nine percent of the students enrolled in A.I.D.P. were long term absentees or dropouts; less than one percent graduated or passed the General Equivalency Diploma examination.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program implementation was similar to that of the previous year. Schools conducted extensive attendance outreach efforts, and provided intensive guidance and counseling services. Despite these efforts, student absenteeism remained relatively high. During a one-week period in which O.E.A. monitored the attendance of A.I.D.P. students in sample schools, daily absences averaged between 30 and 60 percent of the students enrolled in the program. Surprisingly, not all A.I.D.P. schools scheduled daily TELSOL calls to absent or late students.

Students who did attend school had frequent contact with A.I.D.P. staff. During this one-week period, about two-thirds of the enrolled students had contact with a staff member at least once a week, and many had multiple contacts. Many of these contacts were initiated by the students themselves, and demonstrated their comfort with and reliance upon the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor, facilitator, and attendance outreach workers for assistance and advice.

The health services component of the program again appeared to have little direct impact on high school A.I.D.P. students. Health Resource Coordinators indicated that individual health plans for these students had not been set up, and that no special efforts were made to provide health care to A.I.D.P. students. Similarly, the school-level linkages component of the program had little impact on the welfare of high school A.I.D.P. students, although it may have proved useful to middle-school students who were planning to attend an A.I.D.P. school the following year. The impact of this program component on middle-school students is described in the report prepared by O.E.A.'s Student Progress Evaluation Unit.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program Objectives

Again as last year, objectives for the 1985-96 A.I.D.P. program were as follows:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have 1986-87 attendance that is better than in 1985-86.

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86. (This applies only to participating students who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)

- A minimum of 50 percent of the high school students provided with dropout prevention services will earn sufficient credits to advance to the next highest grade.

- Starting with 1985-86 as a baseline year, a minimum of 50 percent of the students, ninth grade or below, provided with dropout prevention services will still be in school three years later.

Changes in Attendance

The program's attendance objective was not met overall, since only 40 percent of the students with four terms of attendance data improved their attendance from the previous year. (This can be compared with a 39 percent improvement rate in 1985-86.) However, the percentage of full-year students in all program models who improved their attendance was not significantly different statistically than the objective of 50 percent, indicating that these students essentially met the program's attendance objective. By contrast, slightly more than one-fourth (27 percent) of the part-year students met the program objective.

O.E.A. further examined this outcome for students receiving core and transitional services. Core full-year students easily met the attendance objective, while transitional full-year students did not. The reasons for this outcome can be sought in several areas, including the differing characteristics of the students receiving core and transitional services, and the general finding that students' overall attendance tends to decline the longer they are in school.

Attendance outcomes for A.I.D.P. students meeting the program's attendance criteria were also compared to those of a similar group of at-risk students. Although the attendance of

both groups declined from 1985-86 to 1987-87, the attendance of A.I.D.P.-served students dropped considerably less than the attendance of the comparison group, suggesting that the attendance services provided the A.I.D.P. students helped them from losing additional ground.

Courses Passed

Overall, the program's courses-passed objective was not met, since only 45 percent of the students with four terms of course data passed a higher percentage of courses than the previous year. (This can be compared with a 43 percent courses-passed rate in 1985-86.) However, full-year students as a whole (50 percent) did meet the objective.

O.E.A. also examined these outcomes for students receiving different categories of service. Again, core full-year students clearly outperformed transitional full-year students.

Employing the same groups utilized to examine attendance outcomes, O.E.A. compared the median percentage of courses passed during the program year and the previous year by A.I.D.P. students and a comparison group. Both groups passed about one-third of their courses in the pre-program year; however, the A.I.D.P.-served students increased the median number of courses passed by nine percent during the program year, while the comparison group made no gain in 1986-87, suggesting that the program had a positive impact on the ability of the A.I.D.P.-served students to pass their courses. On the other hand, the percentage of courses passed by A.I.D.P. students selected for service on some basis other than attendance declined appreciably during the program year.

Credits Earned

The credits-earned objective was not met, since only 25 percent of A.I.D.P. students were promoted to the next grade at the end of the 1986-87 school year. Consistent with the findings for other outcome indicators, full-year students outperformed part-year students; 31 percent of the former were promoted, as compared to only 15 percent of the latter.

Interestingly, both A.I.D.P. attendance-eligible students and the comparison group had the same promotion rate (22 percent), while A.I.D.P. students selected for service on other bases had a slightly higher rate (26 percent). On average, A.I.D.P. students earned 5.1 credits during the program year. At this rate, it will take most A.I.D.P. participants at least two years to earn enough credits to be promoted to the next grade.

O.E.A. further examined these findings by dividing A.I.D.P. students' 1986-97 attendance into intervals and examining the

average number of credits earned by students by interval. This analysis revealed a close relationship between attendance and credits earned. Students attending school less than 50 percent of the time earned two credits or less. The number of credits earned by students increased as their level of attendance increased, with students attending school 90 percent of the time or more earning nearly the full number of credits needed to be promoted to the next grade in a single year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Program findings indicate that few A.I.D.P.-served students are earning credits at a rate that will allow them to graduate from high school on or close to schedule. Only those students with very poor pre-program attendance made appreciable gains in attendance and courses passed, but it is also these students who are earning credits toward graduation at a very low rate. This raises serious questions about the efficacy of a program which has its greatest impact on those students least likely to succeed in school.

In light of this finding and other program elements discussed earlier in this report, the following specific recommendations are made:

- Realistically assess each student's chance of obtaining a high school diploma within a reasonable number of years. If the student is very overage for his or her grade and is earning credits at a very low rate, consider recommending an alternative educational placement.

- For those students who have a reasonably good chance of achieving a diploma before they are 21 years of age, target program services to each student's particular circumstances and needs. For example, students with poor attendance may have family circumstances which prevent them from attending school more frequently, such as the illness of a parent or the need to work to support the family. For these students, program administrators should try to provide more concentrated social services to help mitigate the circumstances preventing the student from attending school. Arrangements might also be made to provide these students with individualized instruction which is less dependent on daily attendance for success. Students who are failing excessive numbers of classes due to cutting should be identified, and steps should be taken to reduce the level of cutting as much as possible.

- Review the role and function of the tutorial period. At present, it seems poorly understood and many students seem not to be utilizing it.

- Review credit-granting practices to ensure that students are given all reasonable opportunities of amassing credits toward graduation.

- Require all A.I.D.P. schools to make TELSOL calls to absent or late students every day of the school week.
- Make the facilitator's position full-time. At present, facilitators are experiencing great difficulty in completing A.I.D.P.-related tasks during school hours.

- Require each A.I.D.P. school to prepare an individual health plan for each A.I.D.P. student, and develop ways of ensuring that such health plans are carried out.

- Reconceptualize the role and function of the school-level linkages component. At present, this component requires excessive amounts of A.I.D.P. staff time while providing little or no direct benefit to high school A.I.D.P. participants.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The production of this report is the result of a collaborative effort of full and part-time staff and consultants. In addition to those whose names appear on the cover, Basima Ahed, John Berman, Gail Edghill, Rosalind Eichenstein, Phillip Herr, Claire Riley, Jeannine Rocha, Ronald Stevens and Jerry Woods spent many hours interviewing program administrators, coding their responses, and analyzing the data upon which this report is based. Laura Santana has typed, corrected, and duplicated this report. The Unit could not have produced the report without their able participation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) program is a state-funded program of instruction, guidance, attendance, and health services for those students in New York City's public middle, high, and special education schools most at risk of dropping out of school. It is designed to increase the attendance, achievement, and promotion rate and decrease the dropout rate of these at-risk students. The program was piloted in New York City schools in 1984-85, and fully implemented in its present form in 1985-86. This report summarizes program operation prior to 1986-87, describes program implementation in 26 high schools during the 1986-87 school year,* and examines the program's effectiveness in meeting its goals during this program year.**

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Elements of the A.I.D.P. program were first implemented in New York City's public middle and high schools during the 1984-85 school year. During the fall, 1984 term, the high school program consisted of eight discrete components, including Intake/Transition, Extracurricular, Mentoring, LYFE Day Care,

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*An additional 10 high schools were part of the Dropout Prevention Program (D.P.P.), a city-funded program also targeted at high-risk students. D.P.P. is directed by the Superintendent for Dropout Prevention and was evaluated by a group at Teachers College, Columbia University.

**The Office of Educational Assessment's Student Progress Evaluation Unit evaluated the program in the middle schools, and the Special Education Evaluation Unit evaluated the special education component of the program.

Holding Power, PREP Staff Development, TELSOL, and Operation Success; a ninth component--Project SOAR--was added in the spring, 1985 term. For both terms, the Division of High Schools (D.H.S.) assigned at least one component to each of the 110 academic-comprehensive and vocational-technical schools in the system; most schools had three or four such components.* Overall, 6,653 students were served by the A.I.D.P. program.

In 1985-86, the Chancellor's Office redesigned A.I.D.P. to provide an integrated array of services to those students most in need of them. The redesigned program included six major components: 1) facilitating services to students, 2) attendance outreach, 3) guidance and counseling services, 4) health services, 5) school-level linkages, and 6) alternative educational programs. These components could be implemented in one of three models: Project SOAR, strategies, or Operation Success. Eligibility for program participation was limited to schools with an attendance rate at or below the citywide median of 87 percent; other factors considered by the Division of High Schools in selecting participating schools were each school's dropout rate, and the need for geographical representation. Each school was to provide a minimum of 100 students with all program services ("full service" students) and a minimum of 50 students with all services except alternative educational programs

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*The features of this pilot program are described in a report titled "High School Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention Program 1984-85, Final Report," available from the Office of Educational Assessment.

("supportive services only" students).* In addition, A.I.D.P. students plus a stipulated number of other students in Operation Success schools were to receive job-readiness skills from Federation Employment and Guidance Services (FEGS) staff.

Twenty-six high schools participated in the program during the 1985-86 school year; of these, 16 schools selected the Project SOAR model, seven selected implementation strategies from several possibilities provided in program guidelines, and three used the Operation Succcess model. The 1985-86 program year is regarded as the first year of a three-year commitment to the A.I.D.P. program by the N.Y.C. Board of Education.**

O.E.A.'s assessment of the 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program indicated that it had been fully implemented at all program sites. Overall, A.I.D.P. students did not meet the evaluation objectives; however, full-year students consistently outperformed part-year students in meeting the attendance and courses-passed objectives, particularly those students participating in Project SOAR. Full-service students also performed better than students who did not receive alternative educational services. Assessment of the credit objective was limited to ninth-graders, overall, approximately 12 percent of these students earned enough credits

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*Two alternative high schools--Bronx Regional and Lower East Side Prep--with smaller student populations were allowed to serve a smaller number of A.I.D.P. students.

**The 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program is described in a report titled "High School Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) Program 1985-86, End of Year Report," available from the Office of Educational Assessment.

in 1985-86 to be promoted to the tenth grade.

PROGRAM CHANGES

The 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program was basically a continuation of the previous year's program. The structure of the program remained the same, as did all but one of the high schools participating.* However, program planners incorporated a number of recommendations and findings of the 1985-86 O.E.A. program evaluation into the design of the 1986-87 program.** The most important changes made in the 1986-87 program are summarized below and in Figure 1.

- Eligibility criteria for students receiving full services ("core" students) were extended to include students who were designated as long-term absentees (L.T.A.s)*** in 1985-86 but had 10 or more days of attendance in September or October, 1986.

- Program planners restructured the "supportive services only" portion of the program into a "transitional" program which included two classes limited to A.I.D.P. students. Students could be selected on the same bases as core students or on any of the three additional bases summarized in Figure 1. Guidelines further stipulated that priority was to be given to incoming students who participated in 1985-86 middle school dropout prevention programs.

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*Because Eli Whitney High School was undergoing redesign during the 1986-87 school year, it was replaced by Automotive High School, which elected to use the same program model that Whitney had been using (i.e., SOAR).

**Guidelines for the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program are spelled out in Chancellor's Special Circular No. 25, 1985-86. These guidelines apply to all school-based dropout prevention programs in New York City public middle and high schools.

***A long-term absentee is a student who has been absent every single day in an attendance period (a calendar month).

Figure 1

Eligibility Criteria for Student Participation
in the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. Program

"Core" Students (Minimum of 100 per school)*

1. 20 or more unexcused absences the previous term or 40 or more unexcused absences the previous year.

2. Designated long-term absentee (LTA) in the 1985-86 school year but with 10 or more days of attendance in September and October.

"Transitional" students (Minimum of 50 per school)*

Criteria 1 or 2 above, or

3. participated or eligible to participate in 1985-86 dropout prevention programs but no longer eligible because of improved attendance;

4. referred by the principal as "at-risk", for a total of no more than five percent of the target population (or, if Operation Success, a total of 35 students, whichever is greater);**

5. failed three or more subjects because of excessive cutting (40 percent or more classes cut);**

6. for Operation Success students only: missed 10 days or more in any two consecutive months.

Special Education (S.E.) Students

The minimum of 150 students served must include a percentage of special education students equivalent to the percentage of such students enrolled in the school. If not enough S.E. students meet the A.I.D.P. attendance criteria, they may participate in the program with the approval of the Special Education supervisor.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

In schools with a significant bilingual population, the block of 100 students should include LEP students who scored between the 21st and 40th percentile on the spring LAB*** test and meet the attendance criteria. A minimum of 20 and maximum of 25 students should be offered a separate block which includes Integrative Language Development, Native Language Arts, social studies, mathematics and/or science, physical education, and group dynamics or tutorial classes.

*In addition to the 150 core and transitional students, Operation Success schools serve selected other students as mandated by a contract with the Board of Education.

**These criteria can be used only with the explicit permission of the Office of High School Supportive Services.

***The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) is a norm-referenced test used to measure the English-language proficiency of non-native speakers of English to determine whether their level of English proficiency is sufficient to enable them to participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the 21st percentile are eligible for bilingual and E.S.L. instruction.

- A.I.D.P. schools were required to serve a stipulated percentage or number of special education and limited English proficient (LEP) students in their A.I.D.P. program. The specific requirements are summarized in Figure 1.

- The amount of block programming required in the alternative educational programs component was increased. Core SOAR students were to be block programmed for all classes, including a group dynamics or tutorial period, while core strategies students were to be block programmed for four A.I.D.P. classes in major subject areas as well as a group dynamics or tutorial period.

- The school-level linkages component was redesigned to include four major components. The funding provided to A.I.D.P. high schools was linked to the number of middle-schools served.

- Greater emphasis was placed on parental contact by A.I.D.P. guidance counselors and attendance personnel.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program objectives were the same as those applying to the 1985-86 program. They were that:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have 1986-87 attendance that is better than in 1985-86.

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86. (This applies only to participating students who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)

- A minimum of 50 percent of the high school students provided with dropout prevention services will earn sufficient credits to advance to the next highest grade.

- Starting with 1985-86 as a baseline year, a minimum of 50 percent of the students, ninth grade or below, provided with dropout prevention services will still be in school three years later.

PROGRAM FUNDING AND STAFFING LEVELS

Funding for the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program was increased to $30.9 million from the $21.5 million allocated to the 1985-86 program. The high school allocation was increased from $7.8 to $8.8 million. Funding for each participating school was increased approximately 15 percent from the amount received in 1985-86, although staffing levels remained essentially the same in all schools. For example, A.I.D.P. staff at seven of the 16 SOAR schools included a part-time program facilitator, a full-time guidance counselor, three full-time teachers, and three full-time family assistants; the allocation for these staff members (plus $5,000 in O.T.P.S. costs) was $228,457 in 1985-86 and $266,409 in 1986-87.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

O.E.A. conducted a comprehensive evaluation of A.I.D.P., collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. As in 1985-86, quantitative data were collected for all students served in the program, and included:

- information related to each student's age and grade, and the eligibility criteria by which he or she was selected to participate in the program;
- the duration of students' participation in A.I.D.P. and whether they received core or transitional services; and
- attendance, course, credit, and promotion information for 1985-86 and 1986-87.

Since last year's qualitative evaluation was primarily an overview of program implementation at all participating schools,

this year's qualitative evaluation provides a deeper understanding of program operation by closely examining procedures at five sample schools.* Evaluation procedures included interviews with school and A.I.D.P. staff members, on-site observations of selected classes, review of logs of contacts with A.I.D.P. students or their parents by various service providers, and the administration of a questionnaire to 59 A.I.D.P. students.

A.I.D.P. staff members interviewed by O.E.A. evaluators at the sample schools included the facilitator, the guidance counselor, family assistants, and school neighborhood workers. O.E.A. evaluators asked all of these staff members about their background and usual daily schedule. The facilitator and guidance counselor were also asked to describe program planning, student selection and programming, attendance monitoring and incentives, and school-level linkages procedures. In addition, facilitators provided information about the functioning of the A.I.D.P. Advisory Council, and guidance counselors summarized individual and group counseling practices. Family assistants and school neighborhood workers provided details on attendance outreach procedures. All four categories of service providers also maintained a log of services provided to A.I.D.P. students

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*This included three SOAR and two strategies schools. Due to an agreement with Teachers College, O.E.A. did not obtain qualitative data about program implementation at Operation Success schools. Information about these schools will be contained in the Teachers College evaluation report.

or their parents during the week of March 16-20, 1987.

School staff members interviewed at each sample school included the School Attendance Coordinator, the TELSOL* supervisor, the Health Resource Coordinator, and classroom teachers. Attendance Coordinators described the school's usual attendance procedures and those procedures specifically related to A.I.D.P. students, while TELSOL supervisors provided similar information for TELSOL operations. Both categories of service provider also maintained a log of services provided to A.I.D.P. students during the week of March 16-20. The Health Resource Coordinator was queried about health services provided to A.I.D.P. students. Thirteen teachers in the five sample schools described how they prepared for and conducted A.I.D.P. classes; their testing, grading, and credit-granting procedures; the characteristics of A.I.D.P. students in their classes; the advantages and disadvantages of block programming; and changes they would like to see made in future A.I.D.P. programs. In addition to interviewing teachers, O.E.A. evaluators observed 15 A.I.D.P. class sessions, with at least one class observation in each of the five sample schools.

Finally, O.E.A. personnel administered a questionnaire to 46

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*TELSOL is an automated telephone dialer which can be programmed to carry any message desired. Each New York City public high school has at least one TELSOL machine. In addition to messages about absences, typical TELSOL messages include information about an upcoming open school night, notification of the student's required attendance at a Regents Competency Test (R.C.T.), or notification that report cards are about to be issued.

core and 13 transitional A.I.D.P. students at Christopher Columbus, Evander Childs, and George Wingate High Schools. Students were asked to describe their attitudes toward their classes and their teachers, the amount and types of guidance services received, the extent of and reasons for their absences from school, attendance incentive and outreach efforts by the school, and the ways in which they would like school to change next year.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

This report describes the implementation and impact of the 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program. Student selection and programming procedures are described in Chapter II, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling services, and facilitating services to students are summarized in Chapter III; and the health services and school-level linkages components are discussed in Chapter IV. Student outcomes are presented in Chapter V, and conclusions and recommendations are advanced in Chapter VI. Appendices provide additional information on the types and locations of A.I.D.P. schools; services provided to A.I.D.P. students during the week of March 16-20, 1987; O.E.A. data collection procedures; and school-by-school program outcomes.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: STUDENT SELECTION AND PROGRAMMING

The 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program was implemented in 26 high schools located throughout New York's five boroughs. Each school's type (academic-comprehensive, vocational-technical, or alternative) and location (borough) is listed in Appendix A. In selecting schools for the sample study, O.E.A. considered a number of factors, including location, size and ethnic makeup of the student population, and A.I.D.P. program model. Since the three Operation Success schools are being evaluated by Teachers College, the five A.I.D.P. schools selected represent 22 percent of the 23 remaining A.I.D.P. schools.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND THEMES

A.I.D.P. and school staff began planning their 1986-87 A.I.D.P. program in late spring, 1986, after program guidelines were presented to A.I.D.P. supervisors and facilitators by Office of High School Supportive Services (O.H.S.S.S.) staff. Program planners in each sample school included the A.I.D.P. supervisor (usually an assistant principal) and facilitator, the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor, and school and/or A.I.D.P. attendance personnel. Additional program planners included the Health Resources Coordinator at Christopher Columbus High School; a dean, a grade advisor, and two parents at George Washington High School; and a representative from the Federation of Protestant

Welfare Agencies, a community-based organization (C.B.O.)* providing career guidance services and internship opportunities at Morris High School.

All of the A.I.D.P. schools decided to continue with the A.I.D.P. model and theme they had utilized the previous year. In the case of the O.E.A. sample schools, one of the three SOAR schools had a special theme; this was Evander Childs High School, which used the theme of Careers Associated with Sports and Health (CASH). Both strategies schools also had a special theme or emphasis. At Christopher Columbus High school, the focus was on communication arts, while at Morris High School, the A.I.D.P. program, which was called Volunteer Internship Service Training Academy (VISTA), gave many students career guidance training and internship opportunities.

STUDENT SELECTION PROCEDURES

Initial Identification and Selection

Selection of students for the core and transitional programs was primarily the responsibility of each school's A.I.D.P. facilitator, although A.I.D.P. guidance counselors also played an important role in the process. Students eligible for A.I.D.P. services were identified in several ways. To locate middle school ("incoming") students who might be eligible for the high

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*A community-based organization is a community agency which contracts to provide various kinds of social, cultural, recreational, and job-placement services to youth who are chronically truant, have learning difficulties, or have problems of social adjustment.

school core program, high school facilitators contacted administrators, guidance counselors, and A.I.D.P. program facilitators in their feeder middle schools. In some cases, the high school A.I.D.P. facilitator or guidance counselor also visited a feeder school to present information about the program to staff and students. To locate eligible students who were already attending their high school ("previous" high school students), facilitators notified high school staff of the types of students they were seeking, checked available records, and sent notices about the program to the homes of students who might be eligible.

More than 100 students met eligibility requirements for the core A.I.D.P. program at each sample school. A.I.D.P. staff therefore gave priority to those students whom they thought would benefit most from their particular A.I.D.P. program. For example, staff at Christopher Columbus High School indicated that they gave priority to students with good reading skills and relatively low absence rates but high course failure rates, in the hope that participation in a high interest arts program and the services of a trained school psychologist would increase these students' desire and ability to succeed in school. Both Morris and Evander Childs High Schools gave priority to older students with high absence rates, while George Wingate High School focused on younger students with high absence and course failure rates. George Washington High School, which has many highly mobile Hispanic students in its school population, gave

priority to both incoming and previous high school students with high absences.

Participant Selection after the Start of School

When school started in the fall, some of the students initially selected for program participation did not report to school, while other students who had not been scheduled to attend that school ("over the counter" students) met program eligibility requirements and were placed in the program by the facilitator. During the fall and spring terms, some students transferred to other schools or programs, dropped out, or were discharged from the program for some other reason. If it was early enough in the term for another student to have a good chance of success in A.I.D.P., the facilitator usually replaced the discharged student with another student meeting program eligibility criteria. Interestingly, most of the facilitators in the sample schools said that the majority of students added to A.I.D.P. after the fall term began did not come from their original list of candidates, but either asked to be admitted to the program or were chosen by the facilitator on the basis of a staff recommendation.

Most of the teachers interviewed by O.E.A. evaluators had students added to their classes after the beginning of the fall or spring term, and said this did not usually present any problems, particularly if the students were added early in the term or the class was structured to use small, discrete modules of material such as poems or short stories. The teachers also noted

that most of the new students knew at least some of the students already in the program, which made the adjustment easier.

STUDENT PROGRAMMING

Facilitators said that programming A.I.D.P. students who had been selected to participate in the fall, 1986 program began in late spring, 1986 and was usually a team effort involving the facilitator, the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor, the A.P. responsible for supervising the program, and the school principal. Programming sessions could also involve department heads and/or A.I.D.P. teachers.

Core Program

Guidelines for programming A.I.D.P. students in both SOAR and strategies schools were more structured in 1986-87 than the previous year. While the 1985-86 guidelines had given SOAR schools the opportunity to use two models* in programming their students for alternative educational services, 1986-87 guidelines specifically required SOAR schools to block program their core students for English, social studies, mathematics and/or science, a high-interest, career-oriented class, physical education, and a group dynamics or tutorial period. Similarly, 1985-86 guidelines had not specified any specific format for student programming in

*One option was to block program groups of 20 students in interdisciplinary classes meeting for double periods, plus a tutorial period; the other was to modify course materials into units of study that could be completed on a variable time schedule for at-risk students returning to school at various times of the year. None of the schools elected the second option.

strategies schools (although most of the strategies schools block programmed students for several classes), while 1986-87 guidelines required strategies schools to block program their students for four A.I.D.P. classes in "major subject areas."

Interestingly, each of the five sample schools developed an alternative educational program which had its own unique structure and characteristics. The basic elements of each school's instructional program for its spring, 1987 core students are shown in schematic form in Figure 2.*

Each of the schools divided their A.I.D.P. core students into four blocks. In some cases, students were assigned to a block on the basis of grade level or particular educational needs; in other cases, students were assigned to a block primarily on the basis of scheduling convenience. At George Washington, Evander Childs, and Christopher Columbus high schools, these blocks were basically "unmixed"; that is, the same students stayed together from class to class throughout the day. At George Wingate and Morris High Schools, most or all of the blocks were mixed; that is, students from the same official class were assigned to different classes throughout the day.

George Washington High School had the simplest program of the five in that, with the exception of one section of English and some variation in the tutorial period, all of its students took the same courses and remained together throughout the school

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*The only change from fall term programming is that Christopher Columbus High School had previously included printing in its commercial art block.

Figure 2. Block Programs (Simplified) for Core Students at Five Sample Schools During the Spring, 1987 Term

	SOAR Schools												Strategies Schools							
	George Washington				George Wingate				Evander Childs				Chris. Columbus				Morris			
	Block				Block				Block				Block				Block			
Subject[a]	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
English	English "1"			Eng. "2"	Business English				English				Communication Arts English				English "1"	"2"	"1"	"3"
									English	Reading										Rdg.
Soc. S.	Soc. Studies				Econ. "1"		"2"	"1"	Soc. Stu				Communication Arts Social Studies				Global Studies			
Math.	Mathematics				Math. Activs.			Com-puter Lit.	Math.							Math.	Mathematics "1"	"2"	"3"	"1"
Science					Biology				Biology							Biol.	Commercial Art			
High Int.	Typing				Cook-ing	Trans-port.	Shop	Typing		Marketing / Intro. to Occupation			Art / Art	Comm. Art / Comm. Art	Studio Art / Studio Art		Key-board	Career Guidance		
Tutor-ial	Remedial, intern-ship, independent study (period 6)				Remediation (different periods)				Remediation (period 8)				Internship and independent study (period 8)				Strand	Career Guidance		
Other													Keyboarding							

[a] All schedules included official class and a physical education period.

-This table is a simplified version of the subject classes taken by different blocks of students at the five sample schools during the spring, 1987 term. To identify the classes taken by a particular block of students, read the table down from the top. For example, block 3 at George Wingate High School took Business English, Economics 2, mathematics activities, biology, shop, and a tutorial period, (plus official class, and physical education).

day. Furthermore, the school day ran only seven periods (including physical education and official class), as opposed to eight periods in the other sample schools. Only one high-interest, hands-on course was offered. However, A.I.D.P. staff allowed their core students to choose the type of tutorial model in which they wished to participate.* Students chose all options except the mini-course. A.I.D.P. staff scheduled the tutorial for the sixth period, so that if there was a special program scheduled, all of the students and staff could attend.

The other two SOAR schools set up more varied schedules for their students. George Wingate High School assigned each of its students to one of four high interest classes. However, except for the economics class taken by the shop group and a computer literacy class taken by students in the typing block, all other subjects taken by the students were the same. The tutorial period was used for remediation, but was scheduled at varying periods during the day, depending on each student's overall program.

Evander Childs A.I.D.P. personnel scheduled all of their core students for a biology course and one section of English, and then scheduled students with good reading skills for another period of English and students with weaker reading skills to a

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*An O.H.S.S.S. publication titled "Guide to the A.I.D.P. Tutorial Period" suggested four possible designs for the tutorial period: 1) "mini-courses" or "modules" in areas of interest which change each marking period, 2) an internship in the school or community for four days a week, plus a teacher conference on the fifth day, 3) remediation classes, or 4) introduction to independent study techniques.

reading course. The latter group of students was also assigned to classes in marketing and occupations designed to give them "hands-on" experience in an area such as managing a store, while students with better reading skills took social studies and math. A.I.D.P. teachers infused the CASH theme into the curriculum whenever possible. For example, students read materials such as the sports page of The Daily News in English class and then wrote compositions about what they had read. The biology teacher video-taped segments of television programs relating to science and health and then organized his curriculum around subjects covered in the tapes, while mathematics students worked on such problems as computing baseball averages or the salary levels of professional atheletes.

The schedule for core A.I.D.P. students at Christopher Columbus High School was unique in that only one group of students took mathematics and biology, while the other three groups had a double period of art, commercial art, or studio art. Furthermore, the tutorial period was used for students in these art classes to continue work on their projects if they wished to do so. Students in the "academic block" could elect to participate in an internship or pursue independent studies.

The other strategies school, Morris, chose to place all of its freshmen students in one unmixed block which stayed together throughout the day and had keyboarding as its high-interest class. For the tutorial period, A.I.D.P. freshmen made up one section of a "strand" class taken by all Morris freshmen; this

class presented subjects relating to career or professional interests, such as chorus, drama, computer technology, or healthful living. The older students participated in a "group dynamics" class which was actually a two-period section devoted to career guidance and internships. The class was planned and conducted with the assistance of a project supervisor from the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. Students were divided into two groups which took the career guidance class during periods 8 and 9 on alternate days--e.g., Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. The Federation teacher then held individual conferences with students on Fridays. Students who successfully completed 45 hours of the career guidance course could be placed in an internship outside the school for one credit. One group of the older students also took a reading course in addition to an English course, while all of the other Morris core students took commercial art.

The Tutorial Period

As noted above, four of the five sample schools elected to program their students for a tutorial period rather than a group dynamics class. All four facilitators said they did so because they thought it would be "more effective" for their students. However, two facilitators also said that they had considered scheduling a group dynamics period instead of a tutorial, but either didn't know how or didn't have the time to set it up. The facilitator at a school which scheduled the tutorial for the last period of the day candidly admitted that he did so because

absenteeism is higher at the end of the day and they didn't want their students to cut their subject classes, and also because having a fairly low attendance rate for the last period of the day lightened teachers' loads and made them more willing to participate in A.I.D.P.

In general, both facilitators and teachers gave the tutorial period mixed reviews. Absenteeism tended to be high, even at those schools where the class was not scheduled at the end of the day. One reason, suggested by the George Washington facilitator, was that students did not think it was a credit-bearing class. In cases where students attended regularly, both teachers and facilitators thought the tutorial was an effective programming strategy, although some teachers complained that preparing for the period was too time consuming, and one facilitator stated that the effectiveness of the tutorial depended to some extent on the teacher's ability to utilize new teaching strategies and materials.

Surprisingly, just over one-half (52 percent) of the 46 core students interviewed by O.E.A. evaluators either said they didn't have a tutorial period or didn't know whether they did. Of those students who said they had a tutorial period (22) and indicated what they did during that period (16), one-half were at Columbus High School and said that they either acted or worked with cameras (four) or did keyboarding on computers (four). The remaining students said that they reviewed classwork or did homework.

Transitional Program

Program guidelines specified that transitional students were to be blocked for A.I.D.P. English and social studies classes. Morris High School separated ninth-graders from tenth-graders and substituted biology for social studies in order to help its transitional students fulfill the science requirement for graduation. The other sample schools divided their 50 transitional students into two groups of 25 using no special criteria except scheduling convenience, and scheduled them for A.I.D.P. English and social studies classes during the fall term. For the spring term, programmers at George Washington High School replaced social studies with business law because they believed this course was "more relevant" for their transitional students, and Christopher Columbus High School programmers replaced social studies with history. All five facilitators said that the courses taken by transitional students were in the regular school curriculum, but that the students' performance in these classes was monitored much more closely than it would have been if they were in mainstream classes.

Other Activities

In addition to scheduled classes, programmers at four of the five sample schools scheduled special activities for A.I.D.P. students. Most of these activities took place once or twice a month, and involved trips to museums, plays, or sporting events.

Programmers also scheduled on-site events such as awards assemblies, fashion shows, and Family Life Theatre presentations to help students develop a more positive attitude toward school.

Special Education Students

Facilitators reported that they had some difficulty observing program guidelines in relation to special education students. One reason was that special education personnel in some schools were reluctant to refer their students to A.I.D.P. for fear that the students would not do well outside of their "own familiar environment," or because students' Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.) did not specifically allow them to participate in the program. One facilitator also said that O.H.S.S.S. clarified guidelines in regard to these students too late to include special education students in their fall program.

Special education students at Evander Childs, George Washington, and Morris high schools took the same classes as other A.I.D.P. students. By contrast, special education students at George Wingate and Christopher Columbus High Schools were programmed by the school's special education department and did not take all of the same classes as the other A.I.D.P. students. Facilitators' attitudes toward the efficacy of including special education students in A.I.D.P. classes varied. Two of the facilitators were not sure whether the students would have been better served by staying in special education. The Columbus facilitator thought that most of the students did not

want to leave the special education program, while the Evander Childs facilitator thought that being in the program was disadvantageous to them because the classes were larger and they did not receive special services provided by special education such as parent volunteers. Only one facilitator thought that these students did better in A.I.D.P. than special education, primarily because they weren't stigmatized.

Ten of the 13 teachers interviewed by O.E.A. had at least one special education student in their classes. About one-half of these teachers said that they didn't treat these students differently from other students in the class. However, some teachers reported problems with these students, such as a tendency toward hyperactivity or withdrawal, or expressions of antagonism ("Shut up, dummy") toward them by other students in the class.

Nine of the 46 core students completing the O.E.A. questionnaire were identified as being in special education the previous year. In most instances, their responses to the questionnaire administered by evaluators were similar to those made by other core students. However, three of these students said that they found their courses more challenging than the previous year; none of the other core students said that their classes this year were more difficult.

LEP Students

Although all of the facilitators indicated that their school

had a significant LEP population, only the Morris High School facilitator said that they had identified 20 or more students who met program guidelines for this population. Of these students, about one-half were eligible only for the transitional program. The Morris facilitator pointed out that LEP is usually defined as students scoring below the 21st percentile on the LAB test, rather than between the 21st and 40th percentile, as specified in program guidelines. In any case, none of the schools identified enough students who both scored between the 21st and 40th percentile in the LAB test and met the program's attendance criteria to set up the special educational program stipulated in program guidelines.

Nonetheless, facilitators at all of the sample schools except Wingate said that they had some LEP students whom they programmed into the regular A.I.D.P. classes. The Morris High School facilitator said he believed that these students benefitted from being in the program because bilingual personnel maintained contact with them so that they received services from both programs, while the Evander Childs facilitator said he believed that they would have been "better off" in an official LEP program.

Only three of the 13 teachers interviewed by O.E.A. reported having LEP youngsters in their classes, although one teacher commented that he probably had some even though they were not formally designated as such. One of the teachers, who taught core English, said that she usually did not penalize LEP students

as much for errors in English as she did other students in her class; the other two teachers with LEP students said they tried not to treat these students any differently from the other students in the class.

A.I.D.P. TEACHERS AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Teacher Recruitment

Three of the five sample school facilitators stated that they had no problem finding teachers to work in the A.I.D.P. program. However, facilitators at the other two schools (Washington and Wingate) said that some teachers were reluctant to work with "such difficult" students, and one of these facilitators claimed that some department heads did not want to let their "good people" work in the program--an assertion supported by the facilitator at another school who said that some A.I.D.P. supervisors were known to "dump problematic" teachers into the program. Most of the facilitators said that they did not have much trouble retaining teachers in the program, although one reported that some teachers left during or at the end of the fall term because they "had had enough of these kids."

Teachers' Background

The number of teachers working in A.I.D.P. in the sample schools varied from eight to 16; the average was 11 per school. O.E.A. evaluators interviewed two or three teachers at each sample school. The total of 13 teachers included four core English teachers, one transitional English and one reading teacher, plus seven teachers from a variety of other

disciplines. One of the core English teachers was also the A.I.D.P. program facilitator at George Wingate High School. These teachers reported teaching experience ranging from one to 39 years; the average was about 15 years experience.

Most of the teachers said that they had been selected for the assignment by their department head or the A.I.D.P. facilitator, and that they reported jointly to these two people. More than two-thirds said they had been chosen because they had experience working with at-risk students, and a similar percentage said they had been chosen because they were qualified to teach a particular course being offered. Interestingly, only six of t teachers said that they had taught in the program the previous year or term, and only five said that they had wanted to teach in the program--suggesting that facilitators' assessment of teachers' willingness to participate in the program was somewhat overstated. Three of the teachers said they had been chosen because the principal or facilitator thought they would get along well with the students, and three said they had been chosen for various other reasons, such as scheduling considerations.

Preparation for Classes

Although program guidelines stipulated that A.I.D.P. teachers were to be given a common preparation period, few of the teachers interviewed by O.E.A. reported participating in such a regularly-scheduled preparation period. However, most of the

teachers said that they frequently met individually with other teachers in the program to discuss lesson plans or problems with particular students.

All 13 teachers said that their preparation for A.I.D.P. classes was different from that for non-A.I.D.P. classes; however, the forms these differences took varied considerably. Of the eight teachers who said they had changed their presentation style, six said they were using less whole-class discussion and more small groups or one-on-one, while two said they were using more whole class discussion. Two English teachers, a social studies teacher, and a studio arts teacher also said that they used small, discrete units of material because of the students' erratic attendance and short attention span. Three teachers said that they were using more reading and writing exercises in class, two said they tried to give written exercises or specific tasks every day "because otherwise the kids don't feel they're doing anything," and two other teachers said they were consciously trying to make the classes more fun and enjoyable. One teacher said that she presented materials at a slower pace, and gave the students minimal homework.

Testing, Grading, and Credit-Granting Procedures

Six (46 percent) of the teachers interviewed by O.E.A. evaluators said that their testing procedures were also somewhat different from those used for other students. Two of the teachers said they did no testing at all, but graded instead on the basis of attendance, class participation, and projects

completed by the students. Two others said they gave shorter, more frequent tests, and the remaining two teachers said that the tests they gave were easier than those they gave to other students at the same grade level.

Seven teachers (54 percent) said that their grading policies for these students were a little different from those used for mainstream students. Most of these teachers indicated that they tended to be more liberal and "flexible" in their grade-granting, and to give an A.I.D.P. student "the benefit of the doubt" if the student was demonstrating a change of attitude or was willing to make up work he or she had missed because of absences. A reading teacher objected strenuously to this practice, however, insisting that it was counter-productive because these students "won't be treated with kid gloves in the real world."

Students' Perceptions of Classes and Teachers

About two-thirds of the core and transitional students interviewed by O.E.A. evaluators said that this year's classes were more interesting than those they took the previous year. About one-third of these students specifically said that the subjects themselves or the way they were taught was more interesting or fun, and several said that they also liked the extra attention and help they got. By contrast, a small number of the students surveyed said that their classes were not challenging enough, and two complained about not being able to choose the classes they wished to take.

About three-quarters of the 59 students completing the

questionnaire said that their teachers this year were more helpful than the ones they'd had the previous year. Most of these students mentioned that their teachers gave them more time and attention than they had received the previous year, and some specifically attributed this to the smaller class size. Others said that their teachers wanted them to do well, made sure that they understood the material being taught, and didn't "yell" at them when they were having trouble. By contrast, a few students complained that "you have to do things for yourself" or that some of the teachers didn't "teach right."

About 70 percent of the students thought they were doing better in their classes than they had the previous year, 20 percent thought they were doing about the same, and 10 percent thought they were doing worse. Students who thought they were doing worse gave various reasons, such as continuing poor attendance or the sense that the work was "not so important." One-half of the students who thought they were doing about the same were in the transitional program, but did not give a specific reason for their perception of their progress.

Roughly one-third of the students who gave a reason for thinking they were doing better cited improved grades or more classes passed. About 20 percent each said their attendance had improved, they were trying harder or studying more, or they were learning more because they liked the classes or teachers better or were moving at a slower pace. One student said enthusiastically that she was "hooked" on her high interest

class, and another student said she was doing better because she was "not just a number or statistic in the class. They [the teachers] care what I say or do."

Classroom Observations

Classes observed by O.E.A. evaluators included at least one English class in four of the five sample schools (the exception was Christopher Columbus High School), two biology sections, two marketing classes, a career guidance session, one studio arts and one keyboarding class, transitional classes in English and mathematics, and a tutorial in reading. The number of students attending these classes ranged from a low of two in the career guidance session at Morris to a high of 19 in a core English class at George Washington High School; the total number of students attending was 177, and the average was 11.8 students per class--less than one-half the register for most of these classes. The number of male and female students was roughly equivalent across the 15 classes observed.

Teaching styles varied somewhat depending on the subject matter being taught. In academic classes such as English and mathematics, teachers tended to use a mixture of whole class and one-on-one procedures. Teachers typically began the class by having the students complete a "do now" exercise such as reading a short passage or taking a short test. As the students worked, the teacher moved around the classroom offering individual help. After 10 or 15 minutes, the teacher would then ask a student to read a short passage aloud or go to the board to work out a

homework problem, or would lead a discussion about the materials the students had been working with.

In most instances, the majority of students in the class appeared attentive and involved, and participated in the discussion at least once. However, in almost every class, there were a few students who were only intermittently attentive, did not participate in the discussion at all, or engaged in inappropriate behavior such as interrupting the teacher at will or getting up and walking around the room. Students in the two transitional classes appeared to be somewhat more mature and less prone to inappropriate behavior than the younger students.

The conduct of hands-on classes was somewhat different from more traditional classes in that students had particular projects they were working on, with individual assistance provided by the teacher. Again, most of the students appeared to be on task, but there were a few students who spent more time talking to their friends or wandering around the room than working on their project.

The behavior of the students did not appear to be closely related to the time of day or the content of the class per se, although the eighth period career guidance class at Morris had the lowest attendance of the 13 classes observed. However, students in double classes tended to become either apathetic or very restless during the second period of the class, if they returned from the break at all, suggesting that double periods may not be an appropriate scheduling strategy for at-risk

students. Furthermore, the high level of absenteeism from virtually all of the classes observed is a disturbing indication that attendance remains a major problem for at least some of the students in the A.I.D.P. program.

Teachers' Overall Attitudes Toward Teaching A.I.D.P. Students

Teachers with prior experience with at-risk students found A.I.D.P. participants quite similar to such students in terms of academic ability and accomplishments. However, most of these teachers also found A.I.D.P. students to be somewhat more intelligent and "street-wise" than other at-risk students on the one hand, and more immature and inclined to think that they "know it all" on the other. Several teachers noted that dating and allegiance to their social group took priority over school, which helped contribute to chaotic attendance and frequently led the students to challenge the need for order and discipline.

Eight of the teachers said they believed that block programming of these students was good because it made them feel part of something and enabled them to receive personalized attention in a non-traditional setting. However, two of these teachers cautioned that it could foster discipline problems if there was too much "togetherness"--particularly if the students all "got into a bad mood" at the same time. Four others were more dubious about the effectiveness of this technique. One said that he objected to the concept of "putting all of the kids in one barrel and labeling them truant," and thought that the groupings should be more heterogeneous so that the students would

have the opportunity to learn from a wider cross-section of their peers.

Eleven of the 13 teachers claimed they would be willing to teach in the A.I.D.P. program again. Several said that they had enjoyed interacting with these students and preferred it to working in a conventional classroom setting. However, one English teacher said he would prefer teaching an honors English class, and another said that classes should be smaller. The Morris career guidance teacher said that he would like to have his classes scheduled earlier in the day so that more students would attend. One of the teachers said that while he liked the students individually, he did not enjoy working with a group of them, while another dissenter said that teaching A.I.D.P. students took too much energy and attention.

III. ATTENDANCE OUTREACH, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES, AND FACILITATING SERVICES TO STUDENTS

Of the five remaining components of A.I.D.P., three because they provided are discussed in this chapter because they provided direct services to high school students in the program and were carried out by A.I.D.P.-funded staff. The other two components-- health services and school-level linkages -- provided less exclusive services to A.I.D.P. students and are described in Chapter IV of this report.

In the discussion following, the general responsibilities of the program facilitator, guidance counselor, and attendance outreach workers are described first; the results of an in-depth survey of program services during the week of March 16-20, 1987 are then reported.

FACILITATING SERVICES TO STUDENTS

Facilitators' Background and Responsibilities

As in 1985-86, one teacher in each school was responsible for facilitating the administrative aspects of the program on a part-time basis. In addition to selecting participants and arranging their academic program, facilitators were expected to chair the A.I.D.P. Advisory Council, hold weekly A.I.D.P. staff meetings, track the progress of program participants and provide direct services to them as needed, plan attendance incentives and special events, and prepare various types of program reports. Some facilitators also managed the school-level linkages component of the program.

With one exception, all of the sample school facilitators had also facilitated the 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program. Only the facilitator at George Wingate High School was new, having been selected in September, 1986 to replace the previous facilitator. Like the other facilitators, the new Wingate facilitator had been teaching for many years and had extensive experience with at-risk students.

As during the previous year, facilitators were relieved from teaching duties for a minimum of two periods a day plus homeroom assignment. However, facilitators at the three sample SOAR schools reported that they spent five periods a day on A.I.D.P. work, while facilitators at the two strategies schools said they spent six periods a day. In addition, all five facilitators reported that they spent additional time before or after school or on weekends on A.I.D.P. work. Facilitators said that one reason for the "overtime" they were putting in on the program was the extensive amount of paperwork required, and suggested that a clerical aide be provided to assist with this paperwork.

Guidelines had also recommended that facilitators teach A.I.D.P. classes if possible. All five sample school facilitators continued to teach some of the subjects they had taught prior to taking on A.I.D.P. responsibilities, but only the facilitators at George Washington, George Wingate, and Morris High Schools were teaching one or more A.I.D.P. classes.

The A.I.D.P. Advisory Council

One of the facilitators' duties was to serve as chairperson of the A.I.D.P. Advisory Council, a committee with duties similar to that of the Pupil Personnel Committee the previous year. All five sample schools had such a committee, composed of between seven and 12 members.

Of the five sample schools, only Christopher Columbus High School had an Advisory Council meeting at the start of the fall, 1986 term; the other four schools held their first Council meeting in late September or late October. Each of the five Councils had met four or five times by mid-March, when O.E.A. evaluators were visiting the schools.

The topics covered in Advisory Council meetings followed a pattern. Meetings early in the school year dealt primarily with programming problems (especially for LEP and special education students), attendance monitoring procedures, and health services. Later meetings focused primarily on the reasons for student absences and lateness, such as illness, boredom with school, family concerns, and public transportation problems. Suggestions for alleviating some of these problems included a shortened school day, special motivational activities such as trips, having both morning and afternoon official classes so that late students would receive a half-day attendance credit, and a "peer-buddy" system.

Program facilitators at Morris and George Washington High Schools said that their Advisory Council was an effective

vehicle for joint discussion and action. The other facilitators thought that while the Council was a useful forum, many problems required individual actions and solutions. However, all of the facilitators agreed that the Council was probably the best way of ensuring that A.I.D.P. students received appropriate services.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

As in the 1985-86 program, each A.I.D.P. school had a full-time guidance counselor responsible for identifying and addressing problems of individual A.I.D.P. students that might contribute to poor attendance. At the five sample schools, three of the counselors had worked in A.I.D.P. the previous year, while the counselors at Evander Childs and Morris began working in A.I.D.P. at the beginning of the fall, 1986 term. The Christopher Columbus High School counselor was a school psychologist, two of the counselors had a master's degree in counseling, and two were licensed guidance counselors.

The counselors had many duties. Before the school year began, counselors helped set up their school's program by suggesting courses and extracurricular activities for both core and transitional students, assisting in the selection of students for the program, and helping plan students' academic schedule. After the school year began, counselors made program adjustments for individual students as needed, provided group and individual counseling and guidance to the students, and conferred with parents in regard to attendance and other problems which might be negatively affecting their child's ability to achieve success in

school. Some counselors also had primary responsibility for the school-level linkages program.

ATTENDANCE OUTREACH AND INCENTIVES

Attendance Outreach Staff

As in the 1985-86 program, all A.I.D.P. schools received funding for one or more attendance outreach workers to follow up on the absences of targeted students. All five sample schools had the same level of outreach personnel as the previous year; that is, George Wingate High School was funded for three A.I.D.P. outreach workers, while the other four sample schools were funded for two family assistants and/or school neighborhood workers. At George Wingate High School and the two strategies schools, one of the outreach workers was responsible for transmitting TELSOL messages to absent students. With the exception of the family assistants at Morris and George Wingate High Schools, all of the outreach workers had worked in A.I.D.P. the previous year.

Outreach workers at each of the five sample schools followed the same general procedures for monitoring and tracking the attendance of A.I.D.P. students.

1. A record card or sheet was set up for each core and transitional student in the program.

2. To identify which A.I.D.P. students were absent each day, an outreach worker checked the school's computer-generated absence list* or, if such a list was not

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*Each subject teacher maintains a record of Students' absences and latenesses and prepares a weekly summary of these absences. In addition, official attendance for the school is taken in homeroom (official class) during the third period of the school day. If the school is utilizing

available, went to the attendance office and checked the attendance books of all A.I.D.P. official classes.

3. To identify "cutters" (students who attend official class but fail to attend others), an outreach worker might visit selected A.I.D.P. subject classes, check the weekly absence sheets prepared by subject teachers, or follow up on "cut slips" sent to them by subject class teachers.

4. The outreach worker would note the absence, cut, or lateness on the student's record card/sheet.

5. If the absence or lateness was unexcused and the student's home had a telephone, the outreach worker might call the student's home that day to determine the reason for the absence or lateness, or might wait to see if a pattern of absences or lateness was developing before making such a call.

6. If the student's home did not have a telephone, or if the telephone number was incorrect or the outreach workers were unable to reach someone at home, the outreach worker sent a postcard or letter to the students' home listing the date(s) that the student was absent, urging the parent/guardian to make sure that the student attends school every day, and suggesting that a family member call the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor if they wished to discuss their child's attendance or progress in school.

7. If the student's absences continued, the outreach workers usually then tried to schedule a home visit to discuss the situation with the student's parents. In some cases, the address provided for the student was also incorrect, and attendance outreach workers could not make contact with the student's home.

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the University Applications Processing Center (U.A.P.C.) data system, the attendance book contains an "I.B.M." card for each student in the class, which the teacher places in a large envelope at the back of the book if the student is absent or late. All attendance books are then brought to the school's attendance office for review and action by the attendance coordinator. In a "U.A.P.C. school," the I.B.M. cards of all late and absent students are used to generate a list that is circulated to staff members by late morning. TELSOL calls regarding students' absences may then be programmed for transmission later that day.

In addition to their attendance outreach activities, A.I.D.P. outreach workers often acted as counselor and advisor to the A.I.D.P. students. One of the A.I.D.P. school neighborhood workers commented that it was "often more like being a social worker than anything else."

Attendance Incentives

As during the previous year, A.I.D.P. schools were allowed to offer attendance "incentives" in the form of goods or services to motivate and reward students for good attendance. For the 1986-87 school year, such incentives were limited to a maximum of $50.00 per student.

All five sample schools used attendance incentives. The most frequently used incentive was a certificate for good attendance, which was usually presented at an awards ceremony at the end of the month or marking period. Between 10 and 30 students per school usually received such an award during each period.

Four of the sample schools reported using inexpensive merchandise or clothing for incentives, three sponsored at least one group breakfast, two awarded internships in a school office, and one each sponsored a group luncheon or had good attenders serve as hosts in the school-level linkages program. Trips were also a popular form of incentive. In some cases, the costs were completely underwritten by an outside organization; in most cases, students made a small contribution to the cost of the trip.

Facilitators' reactions to the use of incentives were mixed. Three said attendance incentives were only somewhat effective because only about one-half of the students ever got such awards, and because many students were unimpressed by the incentives offered. The other two thought the incentives were very effective because the students were getting something immediate and tangible, and because such rewards helped give them a sense of public recognition and self-esteem.

About 35 percent of the 59 students completing the O.E.A. questionnaire said that the school promised them "special rewards" if they attended school. The most frequently cited incentives were grades based on attendance (20 percent), followed by T-shirts and tickets to movies or other events (16 percent each). Only seven percent of the students said they got a certificate; a few mentioned small items of merchandise such as a keychain or pen.

More than one-half (56 percent) of the students responding said that if they were given a choice, they would prefer to receive grades based on attendance, while about 40 percent said they'd like tickets to special events. A little more than 10 percent said they would like T-shirts or discount coupons, while a smattering of students mentioned more exotic awards, such as cash or a car!

SERVICES PROVIDED TO A.I.D.P. STUDENTS FROM MARCH 16-20,1987

To gain a better understanding of the specific services provided to A.I.D.P. students, O.E.A. asked A.I.D.P.

facilitators, guidance counselors, and attendance outreach workers at four of the sample schools* to maintain a log of contacts with A.I.D.P. students and their parents during the week of March 16-20, 1987. O.E.A. also asked school attendance coordinators and TELSOL supervisors at these schools to provide data on student absences and the services provided to A.I.D.P. students by their offices. A detailed discussion of the results of this survey is provided in Appendix B and summarized below.

Student Absences

Absences of A.I.D.P. students from school were relatively high. Three of the sample schools reported daily absence rates ranging from approximately 30 to 40 percent, while the fourth school, George Washington, reported daily absence rates ranging from 50 to 60 percent. Absences from one official class at George Washington were particularly high, ranging from 17 to 34 students each day; the average was 24 students per day. These absence rates--combined with an unrecorded number of class cuts--support O.E.A. evaluators' observation that A.I.D.P. classes typically had about one-half of the enrolled students present.

These absences were distributed fairly widely across the student populations involved. At three sample schools, roughly two-thirds of the core and transitional student were absent at

*Morris High School was not included in the O.E.A. sample because service delivery data at this school was being collected by Teachers College as part of the contract renewal process. The data collected were not parallel with that collected by O.E.A., and are not discussed in this report.

least one day that week*, and roughly 13 percent of the combined population was absent every single day. At George Washington High School, more than 80 percent (83 percent) of the students were absent at least one day, and more than one-fourth (28 percent) of the core students were absent every single day that week. The most common reasons given by students for these absences were illness, oversleeping, and a desire to "hang out" with their friends rather than attend class.

A.I.D.P. Staff Services

A.I.D.P. staff members provided a variety of services to A.I.D.P. students during the week of March 16-20, 1987. On average, A.I.D.P. guidance counselors had the most contacts (443) with the students or their parents, followed by attendance outreach workers (259) and A.I.D.P. facilitators (118).

Most of the guidance counselors' contacts involved individual counseling requested by the students themselves. About one-third of these contacts were for the purpose of personal counseling, another one-third were for educational counseling, and the remainder were for other purposes such as obtaining hall passes. Two of the guidance counselors also held a number of group counseling sessions for A.I.D.P. students. Ten percent of the counselors' actual or attempted contacts that week were with the parents of A.I.D.P. students.

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*These percentages are based on the assumption that 100 core and 50 transitional students were enrolled in the program at that time.

By contrast, attendance outreach workers spent most (60 percent) of their time trying to make contact with students' parents. Most of these contacts were by telephone and were for the purpose of discussing their child's attendance problems. However, some calls to wake up students or to urge their parents to attend an upcoming open-school night were also made. Outreach workers also made a total of 42 home visits that week, and sent a small number of letters or postcards to students' homes. The remaining 40 percent of the contacts reported by outreach workers took place in school and were usually in response to a student's request for help, advice, or simply a social visit.

On the whole, A.I.D.P. facilitators spent less time working directly with A.I.D.P. students or their parents than either guidance counselors or attendance outreach workers, both because they were not full-time A.I.D.P. staff members and because they had other kinds of responsibilities. Facilitators at the five sample schools averaged five or six student contacts a day, although there was a considerable range within this average. About 20 percent of these contacts related to the student's attendance. The rest were for a variety of purposes, including personal counseling, discipline problems, assistance with a school-level linkages visit, and planning a class trip.

Further analysis of this service delivery data revealed that 12 percent of the 820 staff contacts that week were with students who did not appear on any of the rosters submitted to O.E.A. by facilitators. Attendance outreach workers at two of the schools

explained that students who had previously been in the program often came by for help or advice or just to visit, and that staff members felt it was important to continue to support these students. It is also possible that some of these "non-roster" students were in the program for a short period of time and were not reported on the spring rosters prepared by facilitators.

On average, about 40 percent of the transitional students and 50 percent of the core students (or their parents) had contact with an A.I.D.P. staff member that week. At Christopher Columbus High School, these averages increased to 54 percent and 70 percent, respectively. Given the high number of absences discussed above, it would therefore appear that most of the students in school that week had at least one direct contact with A.I.D.P. staff.

TELSOL and Attendance Coordinator Services

TELSOL services provided to A.I.D.P. students were somewhat erratic. While one of the sample schools scheduled TELSOL calls every day*, the other schools--including two which had funding for a TELSOL aide--scheduled such calls for only two or three days that week. TELSOL supervisors at these schools reported that heavy demands on the TELSOL equipment made it impossible to schedule A.I.D.P. calls more frequently.

Nonetheless, many students who did not have contact with an A.I.D.P. staff member that week--perhaps because they were absent--received at least one TELSOL call. The number of

*Except for one day when there was an equipment malfunction.

students receiving only TELSOL calls is summarized in Table 2 in Appendix B. Combining these totals with the total number of students receiving A.I.D.P. staff services reveals that between 70 and 86 percent of the 150 core and transitional students in each sample school received at least one service from these sources.

Interestingly, about 80 percent of the students completing the O.E.A. questionnaire said that someone from school called their home at least "sometimes" in regard to their absences. About two-thirds of the time, the student's parent or guardian then discussed their absences with them. In a few cases, the parent also went to the school to discuss the problem with the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor or facilitator. In one-third to one-half of the cases, the parent or guardian punished the student in some way such as "grounding" them for a period of time. In only a few cases did parents or guardians promise students "something good" if they improved their attendance.

Only one school attendance coordinator provided specific information on the types of services provided to A.I.D.P. students by this office. However, based on this information, it appears that all parents of high school students are notified of their child's absences after a sufficient number of them have occurred, and that the school's attendance teacher becomes involved after the student has been classified as an L.T.A.

Summary

While the service delivery data presented in this chapter

applies to only one week during the spring, 1987 term, it does provide a valuable look at attendance patterns and the specific services provided to A.I.D.P. students during a reasonably typical week. Based on this "snapshot" in time, it appears that somewhere between one-third and one-half of the A.I.D.P. students are absent on any given day, and that the absences in some classes and schools are extraordinarily high.

This absence rate means that on any given day, A.I.D.P. staff members are working with one-half to two-thirds of the A.I.D.P. population, including some students who were not listed on the rosters prepared by program facilitators and thus are not officially enrolled in the program. In light of this fact, it appears that the students who are in school are receiving relatively intensive services, with most of them having at least one contact with the facilitator, guidance counselor, family assistant, or school neighborhood worker during the course of a week. A fairly large number of these encounters are initiated by the students themselves, and frequently involve needs or topics other than their attendance.

Not all of the schools were able to schedule TELSOL calls to A.I.D.P. students who were absent that day. In fact, it appears that most of the schools can provide this service only about one-half of the time--even though there is A.I.D.P. funding for an outreach worker to handle TELSOL duties in many schools. It is not clear what these outreach workers do when the TELSOL equipment is not available for their use. In any case, the

heavy load on TELSOL equipment means that the parents of a certain number of A.I.D.P. students who are absent do not receive a TELSOL call on the day that their child is absent, and also may not receive a call from one of the A.I.D.P. staff members. This is somewhat surprising in the case of a program whose whole mission is to monitor, follow up on, and improve the attendance of children with a history of poor attendance.

CHAPTER IV. HEALTH SERVICES AND SCHOOL-LEVEL LINKAGES

Implementation of the two remaining components -- health services and school-level linkages -- is discussed in this chapter because they were not focused specifically or directly on high school A.I.D.P. students. Health services are funded through non-A.I.D.P. sources and are available to all students in the school, while the school-level linkages component focuses on the transition into high school and is designed to help middle school rather than high school A.I.D.P. students. As for the other program components, this assessment focused on the five sample schools.

HEALTH SERVICES

Although program guidelines stated that schools "must be prepared to develop a health plan for each targeted student" which would include review of health records, vision and hearing screening, provision for physical examination, referrals to appropriate health providers, and documentation of service delivery, they further stipulated that dropout prevention funds could not be used for direct health services, except for transportation of A.I.D.P. students to health service providers. Screening was to be conducted by school-based Board of Education and Department of Health personnel, with the "expectation" that the school's Health Resource Coordinator (H.R.C.) would "pay particular attention to the health needs of A.I.D.P. students."

Each of the five sample schools had a Health Resource Coordinator who was responsible for reviewing and maintaining

students' health records, performing or arranging for diagnostic screening, and providing health counseling and referral to health service providers. In four of the schools, the H.R.C. was on-site full time; at Christopher Columbus High School, the H.R.C. worked two and one-half days per week. In addition, each school had a part-time health aide who was primarily responsible for providing first aid, performing vision and hearing screening, and sending "immunization letters" to students. Three of the H.R.C.s also reported that a doctor came to the school two or three times a month to examine students who wanted to participate in contact sports or obtain working papers, or who had been referred by the H.R.C. or another school staff member as having a potential health problem.

H.R.C.s estimated that they spent from one third to two-thirds of their day providing health counseling and making referrals to outside agencies for students. All of them said that they spent up to one hour a day reviewing students' health records to see if any action needed to be taken, and the H.R.C.s at Evander Childs and George Wingate said that they also spent at least two hours a day doing diagnostic screening and providing other kinds of direct health services. Other fairly frequent activities of H.R.C.s included making presentations on health topics to students in the classroom, maintaining student health records, preparing reports for the Department of Health, and locating and evaluating outside providers of health services.

Three of the H.R.C.s estimated that they served

approximately 15 students a week, while the Evander Childs H.R.C. said he saw about 35 students a week and the Christopher Columbus H.R.C. estimated that he saw about 90 students a week. Most of the H.R.C.s said they could identify A.I.D.P. students only on the basis of their class code, and none of them knew exactly how many of the students they had served were in the A.I.D.P. program. Estimates ranged between five and 25 percent. Furthermore, with the exception of an "A.I.D.P. folder" maintained by the Christopher Columbus H.R.C., separate records for A.I.D.P. students were not maintained.

These factors suggest that A.I.D.P. schools did not prepare a specific "health plan" for each targeted student. Nonetheless, all of the H.R.C.s said that they interacted to some extent with A.I.D.P. program personnel. Four of the H.R.C.s said they made referrals for A.I.D.P. students, and four said that they attended meetings of the A.I.D.P. Advisory Council, although one said that he was "not included very much" and attended only a few meetings dealing with immunization, confidentiality of health records, and classrcom presentations on health issues. Two H.R.C.s said they had "case conferences" with the A.I.D.P. facilitator or guidance counselor, one said he let A.I.D.P. staff know of any A.I.D.P. student he saw, and another said he did vision and hearing screening for each SOAR student. Four of the five H.R.C.s said they didn't know whether A.I.D.P. students had more health problems than other students.

Interestingly, only about 45 percent of the A.I.D.P.

students at the three sample schools completing the O.E.A. questionnaire reported having their vision screened, and only about 10 percent reported having a general physical or vocational interest test. Only one or two students at each school mentioned having a dental, hearing, or psychological test.

SCHOOL-LEVEL LINKAGES

Program Guidelines

As in 1985-86, A.I.D.P. middle and high schools were required to develop a school-level linkages program designed to ease the transition between the two school levels for at-risk students. However, 1986-87 guidelines established a more elaborate structure for the program than that used previously. According to an Addendum to Special Circular No. 25, dated December 19, 1986, each A.I.D.P. and D.P.P. high school was expected to link with at least three A.I.D.P. and/or D.P.P. middle schools. Each linkages program was to consist of four major types of activities:

A. Preparing for High School

B. Orientation to High School

C. Small-Group and/or Individual Experiences During the School Day

D. After-School Program

Activity A was to consist of high school orientation activities planned and executed by A.I.D.P. middle school staff at the middle school site. The other three types of activities were to be developed jointly by the high school and its feeder

schools, but conducted principally by high school staff. All graduating (class of 1987) middle school A.I.D.P. students were expected to participate in activities A and B, plus two other enrichment or instructional activities included under headings C and D. Of the four activities, two had to occur at the high school. All pre-graduating (class of 1988) middle school students were required to participate in activities A-C, one of which had to occur at the high school.

Implementation

Primary responsibility for the school-level linkages program was held by the A.I.D.P. facilitator at three of O.E.A.'s sample schools and by the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor at George Washington and George Wingate high schools. Only the latter two schools were linked with their full complement of three middle schools. Evander Childs and Christopher Columbus High Schools were each linked with two middle schools, while Morris was linked with only one. The coordinators with less than three schools said that the "Central Board" had limited the number of middle schools they could work with.

Activities A and B. Linkages coordinators said they had little or no knowledge of the activities put on in the middle schools by middle school staff.* However, three of the five coordinators reported that they had conducted high school orientation activities at their feeder schools, while one

*Information about this aspect of the school-level linkages component can be found in the A.I.D.P. report prepared by O.E.A.'s Student Progress Evaluation Unit.

coordinator said they had held an orientation session at the high school.

The three schools which conducted orientation programs at their feeder schools approached the problem in different ways. The George Wingate linkages team elected to have a group of high school counselors make a presentation to all graduating students at their three feeder schools. Between 500 and 600 students attended each presentation. The Evander Childs linkages team put on slightly different programs for the graduating and pre-graduating students. Between 50 and 60 graduating A.I.D.P. students and between 45 and 55 pre-graduating students at the middle schools attended these programs, which involved a 45-minute presentation on special programs at Evander Childs, followed by a question-and-answer period and the distribution of various types of materials. Christopher Columbus High School elected to bring a group of A.I.D.P. transitional students to their feeder schools to talk with small groups of middle school students about what to expect in high school.

The George Washington High School linkages team elected to hold an orientation program for middle school students at the high school. About 160 middle school and 100 high school students heard presentations by George Washington High School students, including graduates from the three feeder schools, athletes, and members of student government, and by staff members such as guidance counselors and the assistant principal of secretarial studies. There were also karate and dance

exhibitions, followed by a small-group question-and-answer session.

Activity C. Each of the sample schools arranged for visits by small groups of feeder school students. The groups usually included from 10 to 30 students, with about equal numbers of graduating and pre-graduating students. Visits lasted between two and three-and-a-half hours. Students were met by linkages staff and assisting students, and assembled in an auditorium or classroom. After a brief orientation, students were broken into small groups for such purposes as touring the school, meeting with host students to discuss various aspects of attending high school, or attending classes. If the visit took place in the morning, the visiting students were given lunch by the host school; if it took place in the afternoon, the visiting students were brought together again for a wrap-up session. One coordinator (Evander Childs) estimated these visits cost $4-5 per student, including the costs of lunch and souvenirs such as flashlights and keychains.

Most of the linkages coordinators thought that these small group experiences were a particularly successful part of the linkages program. However, some complained that the tours took too much time and paperwork, and were sometimes difficult to conduct because the students often wanted to attend the same classes or tended to wander off to visit friends in the high school. A few also complained that the middle schools did not always make sure that students arrived on time, and in fact

sometimes did not let the high school know if no students were coming for a scheduled visit.

Activity D. This activity was designed to "showcase" the high schools' unique offerings to groups of graduating middle school students. A minimum of 15 students were required to participate in each after-school activity; if this number was not reached by the first or second session, the activity was to be discontinued.

The after-school program proved to be the most problematic of the linkages program as a whole. One of the sample schools (Christopher Columbus) did not plan any after-school activities because middle school linkages staff said their students weren't attending after-school activities at the middle school and were unlikely to participate in such a program at the high school. Instead, Columbus linkages staff invited middle school students to attend two presentations by Family Life Theatre plus a production of "Gypsy" by high school students.

The middle schools served by Evander Childs High School were also reluctant to participate in after-school activities at the high school because staff believed that their students wouldn't be interested and such a program "takes too much time and effort to coordinate." Since only ten students attended the first afternoon session, Childs cancelled the after-school program but gave middle school students tickets to other events.

Coordinators at the other three sample schools reported relatively successful after-school programs. Both George Wingate

and Morris high schools sponsored one weekly session for seven or eight weeks. Wingate offered cooking, typing, and gym, while Morris offered computer literacy and arts. Between 25 and 30 middle school graduating students attended each session.

George Washington's after-school linkages program was somewhat more elaborate. From March 9 to June 8th, swimming, typing, word processing, and introduction to computers were offered on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from three to five p.m. Each of the three linkages middle schools was to participate in one subject for four weeks, then move on to another. Between 15 and 25 middle school students attended each session, with swimming and typing the most popular courses. However, the coordinator reported that staffing became a problem when teachers were not paid in a timely fashion.

Summary

The school-level linkages component gave many at-risk middle school students the opportunity to learn about the A.I.D.P. program at their zoned high school. In most cases, the cooperative effort between middle and high school linkages personnel worked fairly well. However, some high school linkages coordinators complained that the middle school linkages staff did not notify them when a visit to the high school had been cancelled or had not made adequate preparations for a visit to the middle school by high school linkages personnel. Most coordinators also noted that both guidelines and funding for this component were received very late in the year, which limited the

effectiveness of the overall linkages effort, and that the amount of time and paperwork involved in the linkages effort took important time away from other A.I.D.P. work.

One coordinator who had worked with the linkages component the previous year pointed out that many of the middle school students who participate in the linkages program do not actually enter the A.I.D.P. program at their zoned high school. Apparently a substantial number elect to enter another program or high school, or fail to attend any city high school. Furthermore, many of the middle school students who do apply to the A.I.D.P. program at their zoned high school are not eligible for the program because their attendance is too high.

V. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

This section of the report assesses the impact of program intervention upon the target students. The characteristics of the students participating in the program are summarized first, followed by an analysis of the program's impact on attendance, achievement, and promotion. Information about the way in which these data were collected appears in Appendix C.

STUDENTS RECEIVING PROGRAM SERVICES

A.I.D.P. program facilitators submitted rosters for a total of 5,404 students enrolled in the program during 1986-87. Upon examination of these rosters, O.E.A. excluded 150 students from further analyses, bringing the total served population to 5,254.*

Characteristics of Students Entering the Program

Of these 5,254 students, 21 percent (1,063) were entering high school from middle school ("incoming") and 79 percent (4,092) had been in high school for at least one year prior to

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*As in 1985-86, O.E.A. excluded students who were discharged from the program prior to meaningful involvement, or because they did not meet eligibility criteria. Of the 123 students (two percent) who were discharged before November 1, 1986 and excluded from further analyses, 99 were discharged from SOAR schools, 14 were discharged from O.S. schools, and 10 were discharged from strategies schools. Twenty-seven students (less than one percent) were discharged after October 31st because they did not meet eligibility criteria, and were also excluded from further analyses.

program involvement.* Of the incoming students, 75 percent (778) were ninth-graders, 19 percent (199) were tenth-graders, and the remainder were Special Education students. Less than two percent (90) of the total students served were identified as being limited English proficient (LEP).

In general, the students were considerably overage for their grade, as shown in Table 1. Slightly more than one-half of the participants were ninth-graders; of this group, less than 10 percent were in the expected age range for their grade. Overall, 84 percent of program students who were not in special education were overage for their grade. There was a wide range of ages among the 257 special education students served, although most of them (62 percent) were over 18 years of age.

Baseline Credits Amassed

Most schools require that students amass 40 credits to graduate.** Prior to the program year, 34 percent (1,560) of the A.I.D.P. students had not earned a single high school credit. another 22 percent (1,013) had earned between one-half and five credits, 19 percent (886) had earned between five-and-one-half and 10 credits, 20 percent (145) had amassed between 10 and one-half and 20 credits, and the remaining five percent had

*Ninety-nine students were not identified as either incoming or previous on the rosters and are not included in this breakdown.

**The only exceptions to the 40 credit requirement among A.I.D.P. schools were Morris and Boys and Girls high schools, both of which required 47 credits for graduation.

Table 1

Percentage of Participants at Various Ages by Grade[a]

Age	Grade During Program Year					Total	
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	Special Education	N	%
14	-*	-	-	-	-	1	-*
15	9	-*	-	-	-*	229	5
16	31	11	1	-	9	990	20
17	39	39	23	3	28	1,804	37
18	17	34	38	43	35	1,240	25
19	4	12	28	33	18	463	9
20	1	3	8	17	7	129	3
21	-*	-*	3	3	2	24	-*
Total N	2,551	1,719	323	30	257	4,880	99

NOTE: Shaded area indicates normal age range for grade.

[a] Age and/or grade data were unavailable for 370 (seven percent) of the 5,254 students receiving program services. Four other students over 21 years of age were excluded from this table. Age is calculated as of September 1, 1986.

* Indicates less than one percent.

- Fifty-two percent of the participants were in the ninth grade; most (70 percent) of these students were 16 or 17 years old.
- Ninety-two percent of the ninth graders were above the expected age range for their grade.

accumulated between 20 and one-half and 45 credits. Examining credit accumulation prior to the program year by grade reveals that previous high school students listed as ninth graders (1,645) in 1986-87 had amassed an average of only 3.2 (S.D. = 4.0) credits. Previous high school students listed as current tenth graders (1,433) averaged 9.5 credits (S.D. = 5.8), as compared with 18.3 credits (S.D. = 7.3) among eleventh graders (311) and 28.5 credits (S.D. = 11.4) among twelfth graders (27). These data indicate that prior to their participating in A.I.D.P., most students were not earning credits at a rate that would allow them to graduate in four years.

Services Received

Model. A total of 2,864 students (55 percent) received Project SOAR services, 1,223 (23 percent) received Operation Success services, and 1,167 students (22 percent) received strategies school services during the program year. On average, SOAR and strategies schools served about 25 more students than the mandated 150 due to discharges and replacements during the school year (described in more detail below). The three Operation Success schools served a larger number of students than SOAR or strategies schools because of their contractual arrangement with FEGS,* but had a similar rate of discharges and replacements as the other A.I.D.P. schools.

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*The number of students served in each individual A.I.D.P. school is listed in Appendix D.

The distribution of served students by model and grade is shown in Table 2. As indicated in the table, SOAR schools served a higher percentage of ninth-graders than strategies or O.S. schools. By contrast, O.S. schools served a larger proportion of students in higher grades and special education students.

Core and Transitional. About two-thirds of the students served by the SOAR and strategies programs were identified as core students, and one-third as transitional students. In contrast, the percentage of students identified as core students by the three O.S. schools varied from one-third to 85 percent, mainly due to differences in the way each O.S. facilitator interpreted program guidelines in regard to block programming.

Because program guidelines established different criteria for the selection of core and transitional students, O.E.A. examined the criteria facilitators used to select students for the program. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 3.*

Overall, 70 percent of the students were selected for program service because they had 20 unexcused absences the previous term or 40 unexcused absences the previous year. An additional four percent were L.T.A.s in 1985-86 but attended school 10 or more days in September and October, 1986. Therefore, more than one-fourth (26 percent) of the students served were selected on some basis other than attendance.

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*Totals for SOAR and strategies schools are combined because percentage results for the two models were similar in every case.

Table 2

The Percentage of Students Served by Model and Grade[a]

Model	Grade					Total	
	Ninth %	Tenth %	Eleventh %	Twelfth %	Special Ed. %	N	%
SOAR	61	30	4	--*	5	2,788	55
Strategies	45	40	10	--*	5	1,165	23
Operation Success	38	40	11	2	10	1,139	22
Grade Total	52	35	7	1	6	5,093[b]	100

[a] Three percent (161) of the students were missing grade or model information and are not included in this table.

[b] This category represents the percentage of students in each model by grade.

* Indicates less than one percent.

- The majority of students were ninth (52 percent) or tenth (35 percent) graders.
- Project SOAR (61 percent) was more likely than strategies (45 percent) or Operation Success (38 percent) to target ninth graders.

Table 3
Eligibility Criteria Used to Select
Core and Transitional Students[a]

	SOAR and Strategies				Operation Success					
	Core		Transitional		Core		Transitional		Total	
Criteria for core and transitional	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20 absences previous term or 40 absences previous year	2427	87	707	60	312	41	167	38	3613	70
L.T.A. with 10 days attend. in Sept. and October	53	2	2	-*	159	21	6	1	220	4
Criteria for transitional only										
Three course failures due to cutting/at-risk	211	8	110	9	245	32	152	35	718	14
Previously eligible or served	3	-*	311	26	0	-*	102	23	416	8
10 days conseq. absences in two months (O.S. only)	10	-*	0	-*	25	3	5	1	40	-*
Other criteria										
Special Education-ineligible on basis of attendance	54	2	30	3	23	3	5	1	112	2
Other	35	1	23	3	6	--	3	1	67	1
Total	2793		1211		770		440		5186	

[a] Approximately one percent of the students were missing criteria or eligibility data.

-* Indicates less than one percent.

o Four-fifths of SOAR and strategies core students but only two-fifths of Operation Success core students were selected on term or year absence criteria.

However, as shown in Table 3, there were important differences between program models in the percentages of core and transitional students selected under the various eligibility criteria. For example, SOAR and strategies schools selected nearly 90 percent (87 percent) of their core students and three-fifths (60 percent) of their transitional students on the basis of their poor attendance the previous year or term. By contrast, O.S. schools selected only about two-fifths (41 percent) of their core students and a little more than one-third (38 percent) of their transitional students on this basis. These differences in the percentage of students selected for service under the attendance or other criteria are largely a function of the way in which O.S. schools identified students as core or transitional.

About one-quarter of the transitional students in all A.I.D.P. schools were selected for service because they had taken part in the previous year's program or had been eligible to receive services but were no longer eligible because their attendance exceeded program minimums. Special educational students who did not meet the attendance criteria made up about two percent of the total population.

Duration of Service. A total of 1,508 students (29 percent of the total served population) were discharged from the program after October 31, 1986. The months of discharge and reasons for these discharges are summarized in Table 4.

As indicated in the table, most of the discharges were due to transfers to another school, to another program outside of

Table 4

Reason for Discharge by Month[a]

	Two Month Period									
	Nov.-Dec.		Jan.-Feb.		Nov.-Apr.		May June		Total	
Category	N	%[a]	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Transferred to another school	58	1	125	2	103	2	25	-*	311	6
Transferred to another program outside school	69	1	113	2	95	2	46	1	323	6
Transferred to another program within school	12	-*	202	4	44	1	0	_	258	5
L.T.A. or dropout	117	2	156	3	136	3	55	1	464	9
Graduated or passed G.E.D.	3	-*	25	-*	17	-*	5	-*	50	1
Other	26	-*	43	1	12	-*	20	--*	101	2
Total	285	5	664	13	407	8	151	3	1,507[b]	29

[a] Percentages are calculated on the basis of all students served (5,254).

[b] This does not include one student for whom the month of discharge was not stipulated.

* Less than one percent.

- Overall, 29 percent of the students were discharged.
- The highest percentage (13 percent) of discharges occured at the end of the fall term January/February).

school (such as a G.E.D. program), or to another program within the same school. As would be expected, the largest number of these transfers occurred at the end of the fall, 1986 term. About nine percent of the students discharged from the program were L.T.A.s or dropouts, and less than one percent were discharged because they either graduated or passed the G.E.D. exam. A variety of other reasons accounted for the remainder of the discharges.

In order to meet program mandates regarding the number of students to be served, schools added students to the program during the year to replace those who were discharged. Thus, some students received service for only part of the year. In examining the impact of program services on students' attendance and achievement, O.E.A. distinguished between students who received service for the full year* and students who received service for a lesser period of time. The number and percentage of full-year and part-year students in each program model is summarized in Table 5.

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*The fall, 1986 term began on September 9th and ran a total of 17 weeks. The spring, 1987 term began on February 2, 1987 and ran for 19 weeks, making a total of 36 weeks in the 1986-87 academic year. O.E.A. defined any student who participated in A.I.D.P. for 12 (71 percent) of the 17 weeks in the fall term and 13 (68 percent) of the 19 weeks in the spring term as a full-year students. All other students were defined as part-year students.

Table 5

Students Served by Model and Duration of Services[a]

Model	Duration of Service					
	Full Year		Part Year		Total[b]	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
SOAR	1496	52	1368	48	2,864	55
Strategies	689	59	478	41	1,167	22
Operation Success	560	46	659	54	1,219	23
Category[c] Total	2745	52	2509	48	5,250	100

[a] Model was not designated for four of the students served.

[b] This category represents the percentage of A.I.D.P. students in each model.

[c] This category represents the overall percentage of students in each category of duration of service by model.

- Slightly more than one-half of A.I.D.P. students participated in the program for the full year.
- Over one-half of the students participated in SOAR.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Attendance

Attendance improvement by full-year and part-year students. The program's attendance objective stipulated that 50 percent of the students provided with A.I.D.P. services would have better attendance in 1986-87 than the previous year. Overall, this objective was not met; only 40 percent (1,273) of the 3,173 students with four terms of attendance data improved their attendance, from the previous year. (School by school improvement in attendance the percentage of courses passed, and credits earned is presented in Appendix E.) However, as indicated in Table 6, the percentage of full-year students in all program models who improved their attendance was not significantly different statistically than the objective of 50 percent, indicating that these students essentially met the program's attendance objective. By contrast, slightly more than one-fourth (27 percent) of the part-year students met the program objective.

Attendance improvement by core and transitional students. To gain a fuller understanding of these results, O.E.A. further examined the improvement data by category of service, i.e. core and transitional. Since Operation Success schools used different bases for classifying core and transitional students than SOAR and strategies schools did, O.S. students were not included in this analysis.

The analysis revealed that neither core (43 percent) nor transitional students (34 percent) as a whole met the attendance

Table 6

Number and Percentage of Students Improving Their 1986-87 Attendance by Duration of Service and Model

Model	Duration of Service: Full Year N	Full Year %	Part Year N	Part Year %	Model Total[a] N	Model Total[a] %
SOAR	510	49*	171	25	681	39
Strategies	210	49*	56	26	266	41
Operation Success	217	49*	109	32	326	41
Category[b] Total	937	49*	336	27	1,273	40

NOTE: The analysis is based on data for the 3,173 students (60 percent of the 5,254 students served) who had four terms of attendance data.

*According to a normal curve test of the difference between proportions, the percentage of students in these groups who met the objective is not significantly different than 50 percent, the proposed target.

[a] This category represents the overall percentage of students who improved by model.

[b] This category represents the overall percentage of students who improved by duration of service.

- Overall, the program's attendance objective was not met.
- Full-year students in all program models essentially met the attendance objective.

objective. However, core full-year students (54 percent) did meet the attendance objective, while transitional full-year students (40 percent) did not.

Although on the face of it this finding suggests that the program's design, which provides more intensive treatment to core students, had a significant impact on attendance, other factors are at work. Core and transitional students differ appreciably in their baseline attendance. For example, approximately 15 percent of full-year core students but only four percent of full-year transitional students attended school one-half the time or less in 1985-86. (See Appendix Table F for a further breakdown of outcomes.) In other words, the transitional component included fewer students with very poor attendance. In addition, because of the nature of the transitional program, transitional students tend to be older than core students. Generally speaking, the data indicate that students' attendance declines the older they get and the longer they are in school. In short, the finding that core students met the improvement objective more often than transitional students may be attributable to an interaction between the characteristics of the students themselves (i.e., attendance history, age) and the services they received.

Comparison of 1985-86 and 1986-87 Attendance. To assess the impact of A.I.D.P. upon at-risk students, O.E.A. compared attendance levels of A.I.D.P. participants in 1985-86 and 1986-87 with those of all other students in the A.I.D.P. schools who met

the A.I.D.P. attendance criterion (i.e., were absent 40 days the previous year or 20 days the previous term) but did not receive A.I.D.P. services in 1986-87. To increase the comparability of treatment and comparison groups, O.E.A. limited the analysis to those A.I.D.P. participants who also met these criteria. The close comparability of these two groups is graphically illustrated in Figure 3. The graph also clearly demonstrates that the bulk of the students in these populations attended school between 60 and 90 percent of the time. However, a small segment of the sample had mean attendance in the ten to 40 percent range, which tended to pull the mean attendance for the sample downward. In light of this skewness, O.E.A. utilized medians rather than means to compare the two groups of at-risk students.

Median attendance levels for A.I.D.P. participants who met the attendance criteria, non attendance-eligible A.I.D.P. participants, the comparison group, and the rest of the students in A.I.D.P. schools are shown in Figure 4. Rest of school data are presented to provide a context for assessing the program's overall impact on the at-risk population. As can be seen in Figure 4, the median attendance of A.I.D.P. students who met the attendance eligibility criteria was about 64 percent in 1985-86--only a few percentage points lower than the comparison group (66 percent), but considerably lower than A.I.D.P. participants who did not meet the eligibility criteria (86 percent) and the rest of the school (93 percent). During the program year, the

Figure 3
Distribution of 1985–86
Attendance Data for At-Risk Students

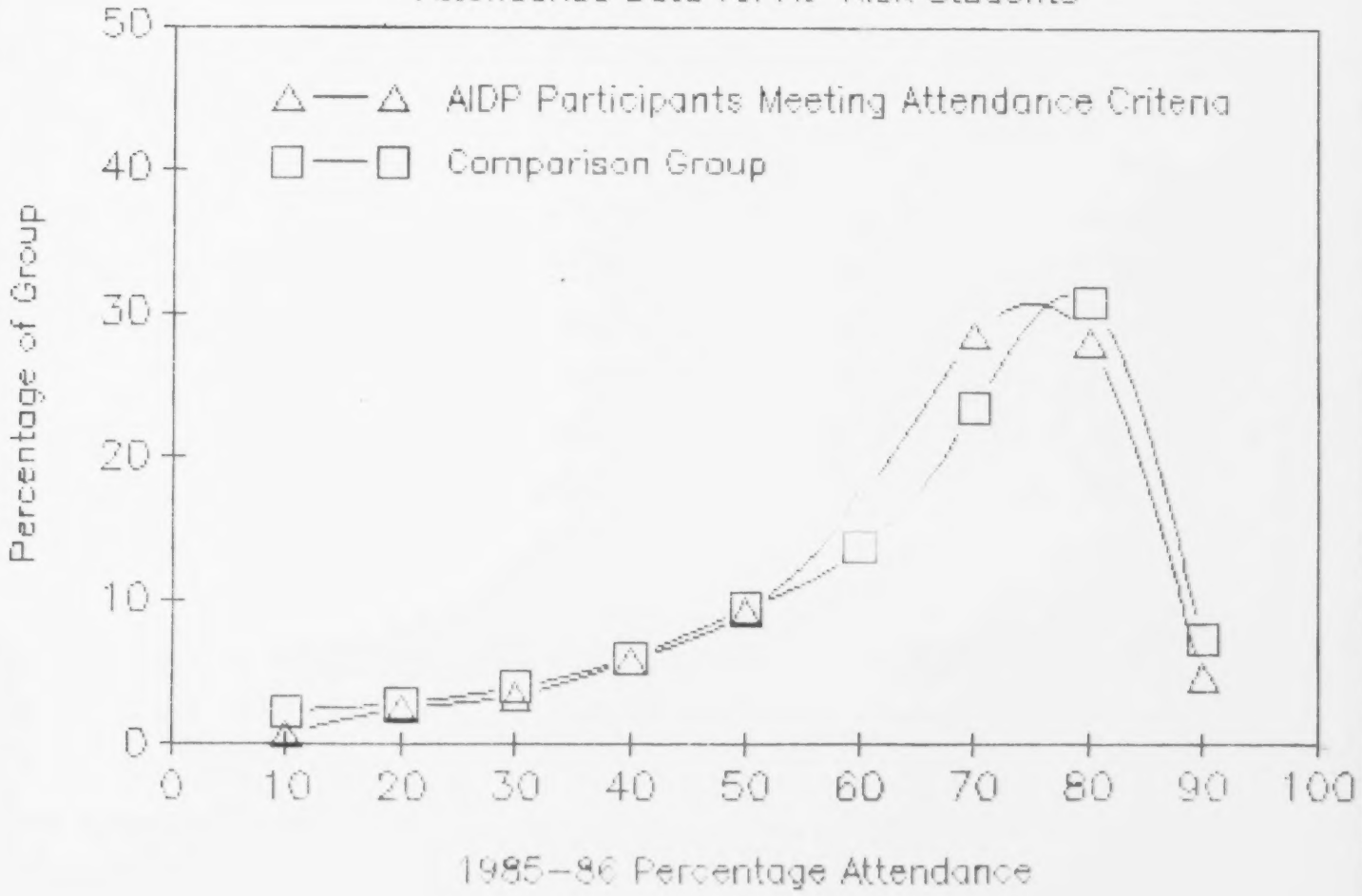
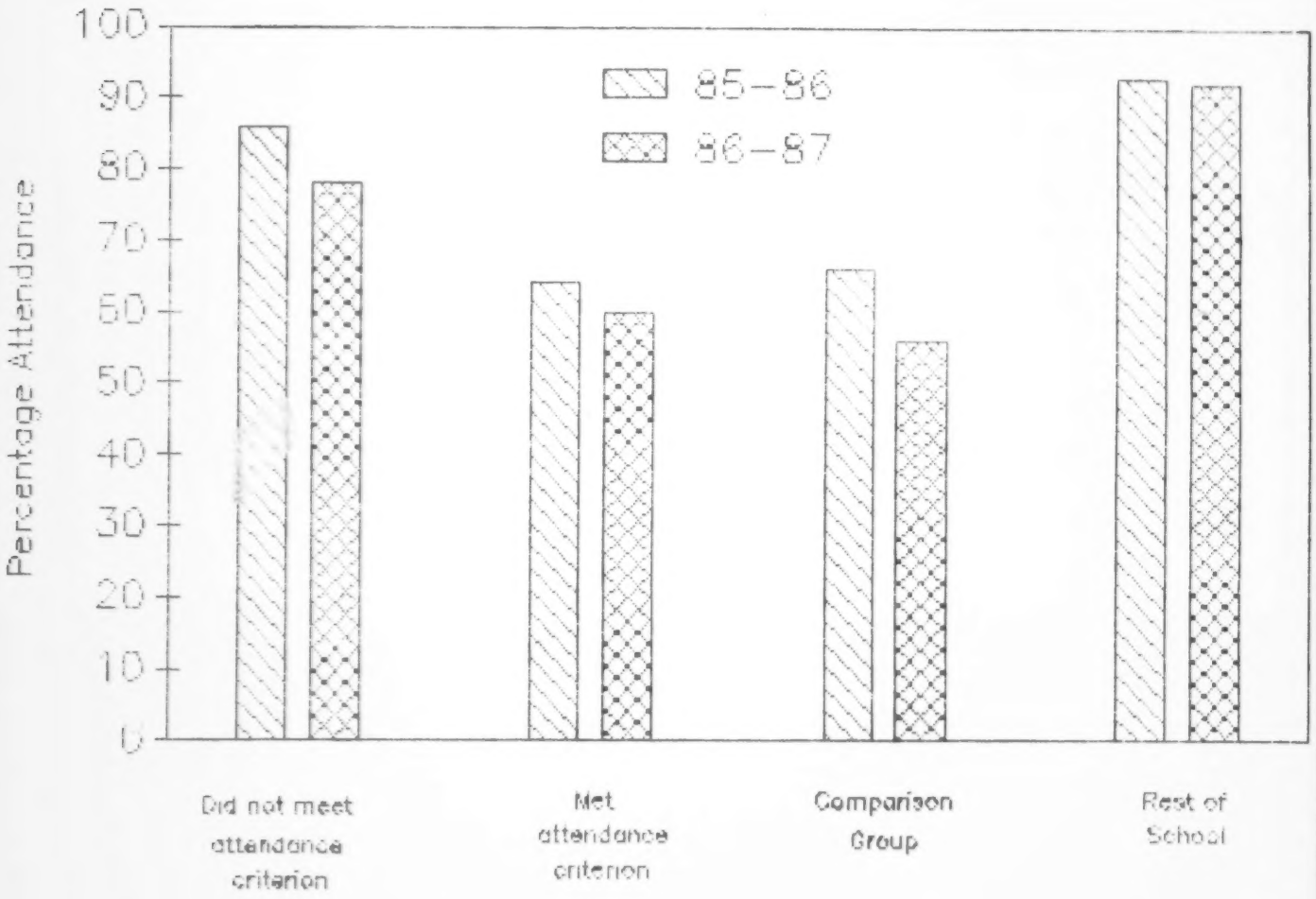


Figure 4
Two Year Comparison of Median Attendance
in A.I.D.P. Schools



median attendance of attendance-eligible A.I.D.P. participants dropped four percentage points (to 60 percent), while the attendance of the comparison group dropped ten points (to 56 points). This latter represents the largest decline in attendance of the four groups analyzed.

These results show that the average attendance of all at-risk students dropped somewhat from 1985-1986 to 1986-87. However, the attendance of the attendance-eligible A.I.D.P. students dropped appreciably less than the comparison group of similarly at-risk students, suggesting that the A.I.D.P. program had a positive impact on these A.I.D.P.-served students. Even so, to conclude that a program which shows an overall rate of decline among students is succeeding would be disingenuous, especially in light of the low baseline attendance of many A.I.D.P. students. The attendance rates found among these students are still far below the level likely to result in success in school.

Courses Passed

The program's course objective stated that 50 percent of the participants would pass at least one more course in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86.* The objective's criterion does not take into account the fact that the number of subjects a student takes

*Strictly speaking, this objective applies only to students who failed at least one subject the previous year. Since that information was missing for 38 percent (2,015) of the population, and last year 91 percent of A.I.D.P. students met this criterion, the data reported here include all students.

varies from term to term, particularly as students make the transition from middle to high school. Accordingly, O.E.A. examined the course objective by comparing the percentage of courses passed from one year to the next. Comparing percentages accounts for both the number of courses that students passed and the number for which they were enrolled.

As shown in Table 7, the courses-passed objective was not met overall. Only 45 percent of the students with four terms of course data passed more courses than the previous year. However, full-year students (50 percent) as a whole did meet the objective.

As with attendance, O.E.A. examined course improvement data by category of service (i.e., core and transitional). The differences between the course improvement of core and transitional students is even more pronounced than with attendance. Sixty-six percent of full-year core students but only 26 percent of full-year transitional students improved the percentage of courses they passed in 1986-87. This finding is similar to the trend evident in the attendance outcomes, i.e., core full-year students outperform transitional full-year students. Again, this finding is most probably the result of an interaction between the characteristics of the students in these groups and the treatment they received.

A more detailed treatment-comparison group analysis of the median percentage of courses passed is presented in Figure 5. As seen in this figure, overall, both groups of attendance at-risk

Table 7

Number and Percentage of Students Passing More Courses in 1986-87 by Duration of Service and Model

Model	Duration of Service: Full Year N	Full Year %[a]	Part Year N	Part Year %	Model Total[a] N	Model Total[a] %[b]
SOAR	452	50	127	39	579	47*
Strategies	133	42	26	26	159	38
Operation Success	209	56	69	29	278	45
Category[b] Total	794	50	222	33	1,016	45

NOTE: The analysis is based on data for 2,256 students (43 percent of the 5,254 served). The large amount of missing data is attributable in part to the fact that four terms of valid data are necessary for this analysis. Baseline (1985-86) data were often missing for incoming students because these data were not available through computerized sources and roster data from permanent record cards were often incomplete.

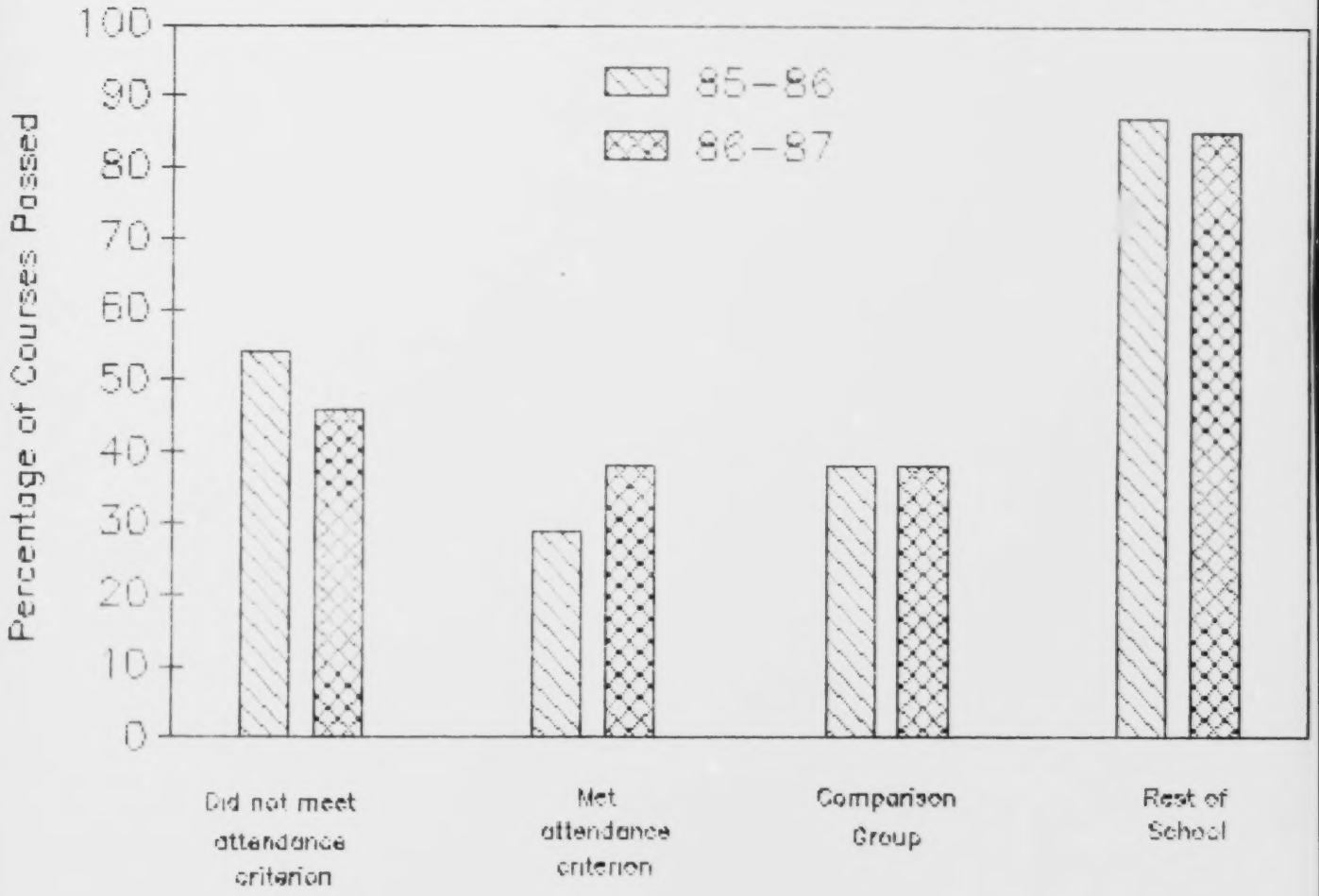
[a] This category represents the overall percentage of students who improved by model.

[b] This category represents the overall percentage of students who improved by duration of service.

*According to a normal curve test of the difference between proportions, the percentage of students in this group who met the objective is not significantly different than 50 percent, the proposed target.

- Overall, the students did not meet the course objective.
- Full-year students in SOAR and Operation Success schools essentially met the course objective.

Figure 5
Two Year Comparison of Median Percentage
of Courses Passed in A.I.D.P. Schools



students passed roughly one-third of their courses in 1985-86. While the percentage of courses passed by the comparison group held steady at 38 percent in 1986-87, it increased nine percentage points (to 38 percent) among A.I.D.P. attendance-eligible students. This suggests that the program had some positive impact among students selected for the program because of poor attendance. However, this positive impact did not extend to students selected for the program on criteria other than attendance. In fact, the percentage of courses passed by these students declined appreciably during the program year.

Regardless of the fluctuations in percentage of courses passed among different groups, the fact remains that students passing courses at these low rates will experience great difficulty in graduating in a reasonable period of time.

Credits Earned

The program's credit objective stated that 50 percent of participants would earn sufficient credits to advance to the next highest grade. In order to examine the credit objective, O.E.A. analyzed credit and promotion data for each grade in each high school separately. The following findings reflect the individual promotion policy in each high school. These findings reveal that overall, only 25 percent of A.I.D.P. students were promoted to the next grade at the end of the 1986-87 school year--a percentage well below the targeted 50 percent. There were no notable differences in promotion rates by model (SOAR, 23 percent; strategies, 25 percent; Operation Success, 26 percent).

However, transitional students (29 percent) were slightly more likely to be promoted than core students (22 percent). Consistent with the findings for other outcome indicators, full-year students outperformed part-year students; 31 percent of the former were promoted as compared to only 15 percent of the latter.

Twenty-two percent of A.I.D.P. attendance-eligible students were promoted to the next grade as compared with 26 percent of A.I.D.P. participants who were selected on other criteria. The 22 percent promotion rate for A.I.D.P. attendance-eligible students is identical to the promotion rate among students in the comparison group. In both cases, very few students earn enough credits to be promoted to the next grade in a single year. One implication of these findings is that if A.I.D.P. students are to graduate someday, it will take them more than the traditional four years of high school. The finding that many students are not promoted in a single year is consistent with the results of O.E.A.'s 1986 cohort dropout study, which reported that 21 percent of the class of 1986 were still enrolled in school after four years of high school.*

A breakdown of the actual number of credits earned during the program year by grade is presented in Table 8. (A breakdown of the percentage of students promoted by school appears in Appendix E.) As seen in Table 8, 33 percent (1,516) of all

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*This report, "Cohort Dropout Study: The Class of 1986" (October, 1987), is available from the O.E.A. Analytic Studies Unit.

Table 8

Percentage Distribution of Credits Earned by A.I.D.P. Students in 1986-87 by Grade*

	Credits Earned								
Grade	0	.5-2.0	2.5-4.0	4.5-6.0	6.5-8.0	8.5-10	10.5-12	12.5-14	14.5-16
Ninth	36	14	13	12	8	6	5	-*	-*
Tenth	29	17	14	13	10	9	6	2	-*
Eleventh	18	14	10	12	14	15	9	5	2
Twelfth	21	7	7	10	10	21	10	10	3
Special Education	49	14	9	8	6	4	8	2	0
Total	33	17	13	12	9	8	6	2	*

*Indicates that the percentage is less than one.

*This analysis is based on data for 4,589 students.

- One third of all students earned no credits and only eight percent earned over 10 credits.

A.I.D.P. students earned no credits in 1986-87; for special education students, this percentage was 49 percent (120). The percentage of students earning zero credits did not differ meaningfully by model (SOAR, 32 percent; strategies, 36 percent; Operation Success, 32 percent). However, transitional students (73 percent) were more likely than core students (64 percent) to earn at least one-half credit during the program year. Similarly, 82 percent (2,079) of full-year students earned at least one-half credit in 1986-87, as compared with only 49 percent (1,054) of part-year students. On average, A.I.D.P. students earned 5.1 credits during 1986-87. At this rate, it would take most A.I.D.P. participants at least two years to earn enough credits to be promoted to the next grade.

Comparative Analyses

Analysis of attendance, course, and credit data indicate that as a whole, students did not meet the program's evaluation objectives. However, particular subgroups, such as attendance-eligible, full year, or core students, frequently met or exceeded these objectives.

In order to more clearly understand the relationship between these findings and their impact upon students' ability to succeed in school, O.E.A. divided A.I.D.P. students' 1986-87 attendance into intervals and then examined the average number of credits earned by students in these intervals. This analysis yielded several important findings.

As might be expected, the average number of credits earned

increased as students' average attendance increased. However, students attending school 50 percent of the time or less earned, at most, two credits in 1986-87. The average number of credits earned increased to 2.7 for students attending between 51 and 60 percent of the time, to 3.8 for students attending between 61 and 70 percent of the time, to 5.6 for students attending 71 to 80 percent of the time, to 7.2 for students in the 81 to 90 percent range, and to 8.9 for students attending 91 to 100 percent of their classes. There were no striking differences in the average number of credits earned by core or transitional students. In summary, few A.I.D.P. students are earning credits at a rate fast enough to graduate from high school in four years, and students with lower attendance rates are earning credits so slowly that it is unlikely that they will ever earn a high school diploma. It is these students who are most "at risk" of dropping out of school.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

A wide range of students--including those with very low attendance the previous year and those with relatively good attendance but at risk of dropping out of school for some other reason--participated in A.I.D.P. during its second year of operation in the present format. Students receiving core services tended to be in the earlier high school grades, and received an intensive program of instruction (primarily in classes limited to A.I.D.P. students), attendance incentives and outreach, and guidance and counseling services. Students receiving transitional services tended to be slightly older and included many who had participated in A.I.D.P. in 1985-86 but were receiving on-going services in order to sustain the gains they had made the previous year. Transitional students were block-programed only for English and social studies, but otherwise received the same services as core students.

While evaluation objectives were not met overall, the findings indicate that students with the worst pre-program attendance made noticeable gains in this area during the program year, while students whose baseline attendance was near the mid-point held their own and students with high pre-program attendance rates lost some ground. These findings have a certain logic in that students with poor attendance could be expected to improve as a result of the support they received from outreach workers and other program staff, while students with good

attendance would have had a hard time improving that attendance, but may have nonetheless derived important benefits from participating in the program. In any case, the fact that the attendance rate of students with good pre-program rates went down during the program year is consistent with the trend among students in the rest of the school.

In attempting to determine whether program services were beneficial to the students participating in it, it is useful to remember that the attendance rate of a group of attendance-eligible students who were not chosen for service (the "comparison group") went down considerably more in 1986-87 than that of A.I.D.P. participants meeting the eligibility criteria. This suggests that although program services did not prevent the A.I.D.P. students from being part of the general downward trend in attendance, it slowed that rate of decline.

Not surprisingly, analyses also revealed a strong relationship between attendance levels and credit accumulation, with the consequent impact on promotion rates. Very simply, students who attend school infrequently pass few courses and earn few credits. Typically, the number of credits earned increases as attendance increases. However, even the students whose attendance improved are not earning credits at a rate fast enough to allow them to graduate from high school within a reasonable period of time. This is true despite the fact that some teachers reported grading policies that tended to be more lenient for A.I.D.P. students than for others.

It is useful to keep in mind, however, that a low level of credit accumulation is not limited to A.I.D.P. students. Many high school students participate in remedial classes that are not credit-bearing. Even if students work hard in these classes, they are not awarded credit and therefore make little progress along the road to a high school diploma. When this low level of credit accumulation is combined with attendance problems, it becomes evident why A.I.D.P. students as a whole are having great difficulty passing enough courses to be promoted at a reasonable rate. That so many of them continue to strive for success in the face of these problems is almost more surprising than the fact that large numbers of them are very likely never to achieve that success.

In evaluating the success of the A.I.D.P. program, therefore, it is first necessary to consider whether the measures of success that are being used make sense. Expressing program objectives in terms of improvement by one-half of the population in some sense addresses only one-half of the problem. Those students who were in the program for the full year met the attendance and courses-passed objectives, but it is important to remember that most of these students were in the bottom half of the population being served. They may have improved, but did they improve enough to make any real difference in terms of their chances of earning a high school diploma? Improving students' attendance rate from 10 percent to 20 or even 30 percent is laudable, but does not substantially improve their chances of

passing enough courses to graduate within a reasonable period of time. Improving students' courses-passed rate from 10 to 20 percent has the same dubious results.

Making such observations focuses attention on a number of important issues. If the program is only helping those students who have the gravest attendance and achievement problems improve slightly, is it really successful in any practical sense? Is the amount of money being spent "worth it" in terms of the limited success that is likely to result? What about the other students receiving program services? Should students who do not have severe attendance problems be served in the same program? If so, how will the program's impact on these students be measured? Until these questions are addressed, it is difficult to determine whether the A.I.D.P. program has been truly successful.

In light of the issues raised above, and in consideration of other program elements discussed earlier in this report, the following specific recommendations are made:

- Realistically assess each student's chance of obtaining a high school diploma within a reasonable number of years. If the student is very overage for his or her grade and is earning credits at a very low rate, consider recommending an alternative educational placement.

- For those students who have a reasonably good chance of achieving a diploma before they are 21 years of age, target program services to each student's particular circumstances and needs. For example, students with poor attendance may have family circumstances which prevent them from attending school more frequently, such as the illness of a parent or the need to work to support the family. For these students, program administrators should try to provide more concentrated social services to help mitigate the circumstances preventing the student from attending school. Arrangements might also be made to provide these students with individualized instruction

which is less dependent on daily attendance for success. Students who are failing excessive numbers of classes due to cutting should be identified, and steps should be taken to reduce the level of cutting as much as possible.

- Review the role and function of the tutorial period. At present, it seems poorly understood and many students seem not to be utilizing it.

- Review credit-granting practices to ensure that students are given all reasonable opportunities of amassing credits toward graduation.

- Require all A.I.D.P. schools to make TELSOL calls to absent or late students every day of the school week.

- Make the facilitator's position full-time. At present, facilitators are experiencing great difficulty in completing A.I.D.P.-related tasks during school hours.

- Require each A.I.D.P. school to prepare an individual health plan for each A.I.D.P. student, and develop ways of ensuring that such health plans are carried out.

- Reconceptualize the role and function of the school-level linkages component. At present this component requires excessive amounts of A.I.D.P. staff time while providing little or no direct benefit to high school A.I.D.P. participants.

Appendix A

A.I.D.P. School Types and Locations

Borough/School	Type of School		
	Academic Comprehensive	Vocational-Technical	Alternative
Manhattan			
George Washington*	X		
Julia Richman	X		
Lower East Side Prep			X
Martin Luther King	X		
Park West	X		
Seward Park	X		
Washington Irving	X		
Bronx			
Adlai E. Stevenson	X		
Bronx Regional		X	X
Christopher Columbus**	X		
DeWitt Clinton	X		
Evander Childs*	X		
James Monroe	X		
John F. Kennedy	X		
Morris**	X		
Walton	X		
Brooklyn			
Automotive Trades		X	
Boys and Girls	X		
Erasmus Hall	X		
Franklin K. Lane	X		
George Wingate*	X		
Lafayette	X		
Sarah J. Hale	X		
Queens			
Andrew Jackson	X		
William C. Bryant	X		
Staten Island			
Curtis	X		

* Sample SOAR School
** Sample strategies school

Appendix B

Summary of Logs Maintained During Week of March 16-20, 1987

As described briefly in the text of this report, O.E.A. asked selected A.I.D.P. and school staff members at four of the sample schools visited by O.E.A. field staff to maintain a log of contacts with A.I.D.P. students and their parents during the week of March 16-20, 1987. In addition, the three SOAR schools provided printouts of all core and transitional students absent from A.I.D.P. official classes that week, while Christopher Columbus High School, which is not on a computerized attendance system, provided lists of all absent core students. This Appendix is a more detailed discussion of the service delivery data presented in the main text of the report.

STUDENT ABSENCES
Absence Data

The number of students absent from the sample schools during the week of March 16-20 is summarized in Table B-1. The students are grouped by service category; e.g, core, transitional, and non-roster (with the latter group including students who were listed as being absent from an A.I.D.P. official class but who were not included on any of the enrollment rosters provided to O.E.A. by the program facilitator). Absences are summarized by the number of students who were absent one to five days that week. For example, at Evander Childs High School, six core students were absent only one day that week, 14 were absent two days that week, eight were absent three days that week, and so on. The information provided on Table B-1 reveals that:

- A total of 273 core students were absent from the four sample schools that week. At George Washington High School, 99 of the 100 core students assumed to be participating in the program were absent at least one day that week, and more than one-quarter (28) of these students were absent <u>every single day that week</u>. The overall absence rate of core students at George Washington High School was nearly 60 percent (59 percent); the absence rate for core students at the other three sample schools was roughly 30 percent.

- At the three SOAR schools, between 20 and 33 of the 50 transitional students assumed to be participating in the program were absent at least one day that week. The attendance rate of transitional students at George Washington and George Wingate High Schools was considerably better than that of core students at these schools.

Table B-1

Absences from Four Sample A.I.D.P. Schools
from March 16-20, 1987

Type of Student	Number of Students Absent for One to Five Days					Total		
	One Day	Two Days	Three Days	Four Days	Five Days	# of Students Absent	# of Absences	Absence Rates
Core								
Evander Childs	6	14	8	6	13	47	147	29%
George Washington	28	17	13	13	28	99	293	59
George Wingate	18	14	7	6	16	61	171	34
Columbus	23	19	9	7	8	66	156	31
Total	75	64	37	32	65	273	767	
Transitional*								
Evander Childs	5	13	6	6	3	33	88	35
George Washington	11	4	4	1	6	26	65	26
George Wingate	8	4	1	0	7	20	47	18
Total	24	21	11	7	16	79	200	
Non-roster*								
Evander Childs	1	1	1	0	1	4	11	-
George Washington	4	2	2	2	2	12	32	-
George Wingate	13	3	1	3	0	20	34	-
Total	18	6	4	5	3	36	77	

* Data were not available for Christopher Columbus High School.

• Total absences are calculated by multiplying the number of students absent times the number of days absent and adding the results together. The absence rate can then be calculated by dividing total absences by the number of "attendances" that should have occured that week. For core student, this would be 500 (100 students x 5 days); for transitional students, it would be 250 (50 students x 5 days).

- The three SOAR schools reported the absences of 36 students not listed on rosters supplied to O.E.A. This suggests that A.I.D.P. schools served a number of students in addition to those officially reported to O.E.A. as participating in the 1986-87 program.

Student Perceptions of Absences

Interestingly, nearly 90 percent of the Evander Childs' students, about 70 percent of the George Wingate students, but only 54 percent of the Christopher Columbus students completing the survey administered by O.E.A. said they thought that they were attending school more this year. Roughly 75 percent of the 59 students cited illnesses as a reason for being absent; in about one-half of these cases, the students reported a trip to a clinic or agency in connection with this absence. The next most frequent reason given for absences by the students was oversleeping, especially by students at George Wingate (55 percent) and Columbus (38 percent) high schools. Thirty-eight percent of the Columbus students gave "hanging out with friends" as a reason for absences from class. A few students candidly admitted that they sometimes skipped school because they were feeling lazy or "not in the mood" or "didn't want to be bored, as usual." A small number of students gave other reasons, such as a part-time job, taking a family member to an appointment, or family or personal problems, for their absences from school.

A.I.D.P. STAFF CONTACTS

The number of contacts that A.I.D.P. staff made or attempted to make with A.I.D.P. students or their parents during the week of March 16-20 is summarized in Table B-2. As shown in the table:

- Guidance counselors had the highest number of actual or attempted contacts with A.I.D.P. students or their parents that week (443). Attendance outreach workers had the next highest number of contacts (259), while program facilitators had the lowest number of contacts with students or their parents (118).

- There was considerable variation in the total number of contacts reported by A.I.D.P. staff in the four sample schools. Personnel at Christopher Columbus had the highest number of contacts (354); Evander Childs staff had the lowest number of contacts (100).

Table B-2

Total Number of A.I.D.P. Student or Parent Contacts[a] by A.I.D.P. Staff During Week of March 16-20, 1987

Staff	Evander Childs N	Evander Childs %[b]	George Washington N	George Washington %	George Wingate N	George Wingate %	Chris. Columbus N	Chris. Columbus %	Total N	Total %[c]
Guidance Counselors	42	9	103	23	120	27	178	40	443	54
Attendance Outreach Workers	31	12	93	36	24	9	111	43	259	31
Facilitators	27	23	4	3	22	19	65	55	118	14
Total	100	12	200	24	166	20	354	43	820	99

[a] This represents both actual and attempted contacts. In some cases, efforts to contact a student's parents or guardian by telephone or a home visit were unsuccessful.

[b] Percent by row.

[c] Percent by column

The nature of these various types of contacts is described in more detail below.

Guidance Counselors

Of the three groups of service providers being discussed, A.I.D.P. guidance counselors had by far the largest number of contacts with A.I.D.P. students or their parents during the week of March 16-20. The Christopher Columbus counselor accounted for 40 percent of the 443 actual or attempted contacts, while the George Washington and George Wingate counselors each accounted for about one-fourth of the contacts. The Evander Childs counselor, who first began working in A.I.D.P. in fall, 1986, accounted for only nine percent of the contacts.

The high percentage of contacts by the Christopher Columbus counselor can be partially attributed to the weekly group counseling session which he scheduled for each A.I.D.P. official class. During this week, the counselor (a school psychologist) had five group counseling sessions attended by a total of 70 students. However, he also had 108 contacts with individual students or their parents. The George Wingate counselor saw nearly the same number of students (66) in group sessions, but most of these sessions were unscheduled and involved only three or four students each. The George Washington counselor had contact with 103 individual students or parents but conducted no group sessions, while the Evander Childs counselor had contact with 31 individual students or parents and conducted one scheduled group session attended by seven students.

The variations in the number of students or parents contacted by the four counselors that week may be partially accounted for by other demands on the counselors' time. For example, the Evander Childs counselor was off-site twice--once to conduct a linkages program at a feeder junior high school, and once to attend a meeting. However, the other counselors also reported other activities which took a considerable amount of time that week. It would therefore appear that the one SOAR counselor spent considerably less time providing individual or group counseling to A.I.D.P. students than the other three counselors in the sample.

This supposition is supported by the fact that the Evander Childs counselor stated in an interview that she saw approximately 70 students each week, while the other three counselors estimated that they had contact with about 150 students or parents each week. It is also supported by the fact that 90 percent of the Evander Childs students who completed the O.E.A. questionnaire said they had either received no group counseling or less than they would have liked, and nearly 60 percent made similar claims in regard to individual counseling. By contrast, about two-thirds of the Christopher Columbus

students completing the questionnaire said they had received as much individual and group counseling as they would have liked, and a few (four) students said they received more than they would have liked. About one-fourth of the George Wingate students said they received as much group counseling as they would have liked and about one-half said they had received as much individual counseling as they would have liked.

The topics discussed in group sessions led by A.I.D.P. guidance counselors depended to some extent on the number of students involved and the reason for the session. If it was a regularly scheduled session, some of the counselors focused on a particular subject, such as health, sex education, or values clarification, while others preferred to let the students bring up the topics they wished to discuss. Small, unscheduled group sessions were usually for the purpose of discussing one particular topic affecting the students involved. In most cases, other staff members did not participate in group counseling sessions, but occasionally the A.I.D.P. facilitator, a teacher, an A.I.D.P. family assistant or school neighborhood worker, or a drug counselor was invited to attend. The counselors said that "verbal, motivated kids who felt they could overcome their circumstances" tended to participate most actively in the group sessions. Students in the transitional program also tended to participate more than core students because they were more used to group situations, according to one of the counselors.

Of the 297 individual contacts logged by the four guidance counselors, 273 (92 percent) involved students rather than their parents, and of these contacts, about 80 percent were initiated by the students themselves, roughly 14 percent were initiated by the guidance counselors, and the remainder were initiated by other staff members. At Columbus, more than one-half of the contacts were for the purpose of personal counseling, and roughly 40 percent involved educational counseling. The George Wingate and Evander Childs counselors spent about 40 percent of their time doing educational counseling and another 40 percent dealing with attendance and cutting problems. The George Washington counselor spent about one-fourth of her time providing passes to students and another one-fourth discussing attendance problems; the remainder of the contacts covered a spectrum of topics and purposes.

Students completing the O.E.A. questionnaire gave estimates which corresponded fairly closely with these data, with between 30 and 50 percent indicating that they received counseling in regard to their grades, and between 25 and 40 percent indicating they had discussed problems associated with cutting and their desire to quit school. About 40 percent of the Christopher Columbus students and a small number of Evander Childs students (including three Special Education students) at Evander Childs said that they went to the guidance counselor when they were

"feeling upset," and nearly one-third of the Columbus students also mentioned discussing family problems. As one Christopher Columbus student graphically put it, "they were there to help me when my parents were putting me through hell at home." In a few cases, the counselor referred the student to another school staff member or an outside agency, but in most cases, counseling was completed during that visit.

In addition to consulting the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor, about three-quarters of the Wingate students and one-third of the Columbus and Evander Childs students turned to a teacher for help when they had a problem. Roughly one-half of the Columbus students and one-third of the Wingate and Childs students also said that they turned to the A.I.D.P. facilitator for help. Only a few students at each school said that they turned to someone else, such as a family assistant, dean, grade advisors, or friend, when they needed help.

Roughly eight percent of the contacts logged by the four guidance counselors during the week of March 16-20 were with the parents of A.I.D.P. students. The number of parental contacts per counselor ranged from two to ten; the average was slightly more than one per day. In most cases, the parent had called the guidance counselor to discuss an academic or attendance problem their child was having. However, the Christopher Columbus counselor also visited the homes of four students that week.

In addition to calls and home visits, A.I.D.P. counselors told O.E.A. interviewers that they usually had visits from the parents of A.I.D.P. students a few times a week. The topics of these visits were similar to those discussed by telephone, although a greater number concerned the student's relationship with his or her parents. One counselor (George Washington) also reported that she asked parents to come in if their child was just being admitted to the program.

Although program guidelines specifically required A.I.D.P. counselors to arrange activities for the parents of at-risk students, counselors in the sample schools reported a limited number of such activities. A.I.D.P. staff members at George Wingate High School sponsored an orientation session at the beginning of the fall term which was attended by only a few parents, while Christopher Columbus and George Washington High Schools had an orientation program at the beginning of both terms which was attended by between 25 and 40 parents. Washington also held an open school night in November, 1986 which about 35 parents of SOAR students attended.

Attendance Outreach Services

A.I.D.P. attendance outreach workers at the four sample schools contacted or tried to contact 259 students or their

parents during the week of March 16-20. However, while outreach workers at George Washington and Christopher Columbus High Schools recorded approximately 100 contacts each, outreach staff at the other two schools contacted fewer than 30 students each.* These differences were partially due to the fact that George Wingate High School was short one family assistant and that the family assistant who was there was very new to the job, while the family assistant at Evander Childs High School did not supply a record of contacts for one day that week.

About 40 percent of the contacts between outreach workers and students took place in school. Most of these in-school contacts were initiated by the students themselves for such purposes as obtaining a late pass, discussing a problem they were having with one of their teachers, obtaining personal or vocational counseling, or just socializing. The other in-school contacts were initiated by outreach workers for such purposes as discussing a student's erratic attendance.

Slightly more than one-third of the contacts during the week of March 16-20 were telephone calls between an outreach worker and a student or parent. The majority of these contacts were made by an outreach worker to follow up on the student's absence, although a number were regularly scheduled "wakeup" calls or were made for the purpose of informing parents about an upcoming open school night. In some cases, no one was at home to take the telephone call.

Sixteen percent of the contacts were attempted home visits by the outreach workers. Outreach workers in the four sample schools made 42 home visits during the week of March 16-20 for such purposes as discussing the student's absence or academic problems, assessing the home situation to determine the types of stresses which might be affecting the student's performance in school, or "checking out" a student's complaints about his parents. The number of visits made varied from a low of five at George Wingate High School to a high of 22 at Evander Childs. In almost one-half (20) of the instances, no one was at home.** In several other instances, the person answering the door was a friend, neighbor, or relative rather than the student's parent

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*Outreach workers at several of the schools commented to O.E.A. evaluators that this was a particularly busy week for them, because in addition to their normal duties, they were preparing rosters of students participating in the spring A.I.D.P. program for O.E.A.'s use in evaluating the program.

**This suggests that a home visit was attempted because outreach workers had been unable to contact the student's home by telephone and/or had received no response to letters regarding the student's absences.

or guardian. In either case, the outreach worker usually left a letter for the student's parents. After returning to school, outreach workers prepared a report for the A.I.D.P. facilitator or guidance counselor detailing the results of each visit.

The remaining contacts between outreach workers and A.I.D.P. students during the week of March 16-20 were letters or postcards sent to students' homes by the outreach workers. Most letters and postcards were sent to advise parents of their child's absences, although outreach workers also occasionally wrote to invite the parent to an open school night or to report that their child was doing exceptionally well in school.

Facilitators

The service delivery data provided by A.I.D.P. facilitators indicate that the number of contacts facilitators had with A.I.D.P. students or their parents varied considerably from school to school. Interviews with facilitators conducted by O.E.A. evaluators suggest that these differences resulted from such factors as the division of responsibilities between the facilitator and other staff members (particularly the A.I.D.P. guidance counselor) and other demands on the facilitator's time.

Either the student or the facilitator each initiated the contact about 40 percent of the time, while the student's parents or other school staff each initiated the contact about 10 percent of the time. Ninety percent of the encounters took place at the school, around eight percent involved a telephone conversation between the facilitator and the student's parents, and two percent involved a letter or postcard sent to the student's home by the facilitator.

The reasons for these encounters were quite varied. The student's attendance was the topic of conversation only about 20 percent of the time, while academic problems, personal counseling, and discipline matters each accounted for roughly 15 percent of the contacts that week. About 10 percent each of the students assisted the facilitator with a school-level linkages visit by middle school A.I.D.P. students, participated in a group counseling session conducted by the facilitator, or went on a trip conducted by the facilitator. In the remaining cases, a student dropped by for a social visit, or the facilitator assisted a student aide with a clerical problem or sought a student out to "affirm" that he or she was doing well in the program.

During the interviews conducted by O.E.A. evaluators, facilitators estimated that they had in-school conferences with parents about twice a week, and participated in special orientation or open school programs involving parents about twice

a year. Three of the five facilitators also reported making one or two home visits a year.

TELSOL SERVICES

The level of TELSOL services provided to absent A.I.D.P. students varied considerably among the sample schools. At Evander Childs, such calls were scheduled for each day that a student was absent, although an equipment malfunction prevented such calls one day during the week of the survey. At George Washington High School, by contrast, demands on the TELSOL system were so heavy that calls to the homes of absent A.I.D.P. students were made only two days that week. At Christopher Columbus High School, A.I.D.P. absence calls were scheduled for three days that week, while at George Wingate High School, TELSOL calls regarding an upcoming open school night were made to the homes of A.I.D.P. students for four days that week; during two of those days, a message regarding students' absences was also transmitted.

Although O.E.A.'s sample was limited to only one week during the middle of the 1987 spring term, there is no evidence to suggest that this was an unusual week in terms of the TELSOL services provided to A.I.D.P. students. Thus, it appears that unless an A.I.D.P. staff member called the students' home, A.I.D.P. students' parents were not always notified the day that their child was absent from school.

ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR SERVICES

Attendance coordinators at the SOAR schools did not provide detailed information on the types of services their office provided to A.I.D.P. students or their parents. However, the attendance coordinator at Christopher Columbus High School reported that her staff sent 55 postcards regarding students' absences for a period of several days to their homes. In addition, the coordinator issued one "407" form* requesting the school's attendance teacher to investigate the extended absence of a student; followed up on five other "407" investigations; and completed two telephone calls regarding student's absences.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING A.I.D.P. STAFF SERVICES

The number of contacts A.I.D.P. staff members had with

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*This form is titled "Attendance Teacher's Absentee Report" and is forwarded to the Bureau of Attendance at the Board of Education in order to initiate action regarding a student's excessive absences.

A.I.D.P. students or their parents can be translated into the number of students receiving these services. Table B-3 summarizes the number of core, transitional, and non-roster students and/or parents who had these contacts with A.I.D.P. staff. The table shows the number of students who had between one and eight contacts with A.I.D.P. staff.

For example, 25 Evander Childs core students had one contact with A.I.D.P. staff, 11 had two contacts, four had three contacts, and one had five contacts. Thus, a total of 41 core students at this school had some interaction with the A.I.D.P. facilitator, guidance counselor, or attendance workers. Fourteen transitional and eight non-roster students also had some contact with A.I.D.P. staff, making a total of 63 Evander Childs students who had contact with at least one A.I.D.P. staff member. Thirty-nine (62 percent) of these students had only one contact with staff.

Not surprisingly in light of the analysis of student/parent contacts presented in Table B-2, Christopher Columbus A.I.D.P. staffers served the largest number of students (115), followed by George Washington (92), George Wingate (77), and Evander Childs, respectively. It is also interesting to note that Columbus had the highest percentage (63 percent) of students having multiple contacts with A.I.D.P. staff, with George Washington High School a close second (49 percent). The George Washington totals are quite surprising, considering the high absentee level at this school.

There was also an appreciable number of students at each of the sample schools who had no contact with A.I.D.P. staff but received at least one TELSOL call, as shown in Table B-4.* The number of students receiving such calls was affected to some extent by the number of days that week that TELSOL calls were made to A.I.D.P. students at that school. Nonetheless, a fair number of core, transitional, and non-roster A.I.D.P. students who had no contact with A.I.D.P. staff received at least one TELSOL call that week.

The table shows the number of core, transitional, and non-roster students who received only TELSOL calls for one or more days. For example, 21 core students at George Wingate High School received a TELSOL call one day that week, 11 core students at this school were called twice that week, and three core students were called three days that week. TELSOL calls were not made to A.I.D.P. students at that school two days that week.

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*The table does <u>not</u> include students who received TELSOL calls <u>in addition</u> to A.I.D.P. staff services. TELSOL calls received by this group are not shown on any of the tables in this chapter.

Table B-3

Number of Student Contacts

Students	# of Contacts 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	# of Students Served
Evander Childs									
Core	25	11	4	0	1	0	0	0	41
Transitional	6	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	14
Non-roster	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Total	39	15	6	2	1	0	0	0	63
George Washington									
Core	32	8	11	4	2	0	3	1	61
Transitional	7	3	2	2	0	1	0	1	15
Non-roster	8	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	16
Total	47	12	16	10	2	1	3	2	92
George Wingate									
Core	30	16	2	1	0	0	0	0	49
Transitional	10	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	18
Non-roster	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Total	48	24	4	1					77
Christopher Columbus									
Core	22	23	14	4	4	0	1	2	70
Transitional	10	4	4	3	3	1	1	1	27
Non-roster	11	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	18
Total	43	29	21	8	8	1	2	3	115

Table B-4

Number of Students Receiving TELSOL
Calls But Having No Other Contact With A.I.D.P. Staff
(other than teachers)

	Number of Days Called*				Number of students Called
	1	2	3	4	
Evander Childs					
Core	13	7	3	4	27
Transitional	9	11	2	1	23
Non-roster	0	0	1	0	1
Total	18	18	6	5	47
George Washington					
Core	18	22	*	*	40
Transitional	5	5	*	*	10
Non-roster	1	4	*	*	5
Total	24	31			55
George Wingate					
Core	21	11	3	*	35
Transitional	20	7	-	*	27
Non-roster	11	4	1	*	16
Total	52	22	4		78
Christopher Columbus					
Core	7	5	6	*	18
Transitional	2	-	-	*	2
Non-roster	-	-	-	*	0
Total	9	5	6		20

*TELSOL calls were not made to A.I.D.P. students that day.

Nonetheless, this school had the highest number (78) of students who received one or more TELSOL calls but no other service from A.I.D.P. staff members that week, while Christopher Columbus High School had the smallest number of students who received TELSOL calls only that week.

APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTION AND FILE PREPARATION PROCEDURES

O.E.A.'s assessment of A.I.D.P. student outcomes required a complex data collection and analysis process. Three major data collections were conducted at the 26 schools during 1986-87; one in October, 1986, one in February, 1987, and one in June, 1987. Information from each of these data collections was keypunched onto computer tapes that were matched with several other computerized sources of student information. These tapes were merged into a single final tape containing all of the available information on each of the A.I.D.P. participants during the 1986-87 school year.

CREATION OF THE INITIAL ROSTER OF A.I.D.P. STUDENTS: OCTOBER, 1986

In late October, O.E.A. provided A.I.D.P. program facilitators with blank roster forms and a preprinted label for each student in the school who had been in the New York City public school system previously. Label information included the student's name, N.Y.C. I.D. number, gender, date of birth, and fall, 1985 and spring, 1986 attendance data.* If a label was available for a student who was enrolled in A.I.D.P. in September and October, 1986, the facilitator affixed the label onto one

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*These data were obtained from the Student Information Services (SIS) Biofile and the attendance subsystem of the Biofile.

ofthe blank roster forms. If an A.I.D.P. student was not in the New York City public school system previously, the facilitator entered biographical data on the form by hand.

Facilitators then indicated the date each student entered the A.I.D.P. program (in most cases, this was the day that school started), whether the student was entering high school from middle school ("incoming") or was in high school last year ("previous"), whether the student was in the core or transitional group, and the criteria the facilitator used to select the student for the program. Facilitators in non-computerized schools also entered baseline (1985-86) attendance, course, and credit data on the roster forms; for computerized schools, O.E.A. obtained this data from central data sources.*

UPDATE OF THE INITIAL FALL ROSTER: FEBRUARY, 1987

In February, 1987, O.E.A. provided program facilitators with two types of rosters with which to update the initial roster information about students enrolled in the program:

1. a preprinted computerized roster containing the name and I.D. number of each student on the original roster that the facilitator had provided to O.E.A in October. Facilitators used these preprinted rosters to indicate whether and when any student had been discharged and the reason for the discharge (transferred to another school, etc). Facilitators at non-computerized schools also entered the number of courses passed and failed and the number of credits earned by each student during the fall term; for computerized schools, O.E.A. obtained these data from central data files.

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*Attendance data provided by the Student Information Services only went through May, 1986. If the facilitator knew of additional absences in June which made the student eligible for the program on the basis of attendance, this information was added to the roster by the facilitator.

2. blank roster forms for those students added to the program between November 1, 1986 and the end of the fall term (January 31, 1987). For each of these students, facilitators provided biographical data, baseline attendance data, course and credit data, category of services received (core or transitional), and discharge date and reason (if the student had been discharged from the program before or at the end of the fall term). Facilitators at non-computerized schools also provided fall, 1986 course and credit data; for computerized schools, O.E.A. obtained these data from central files.

SPRING PARTICIPATION DATA: JUNE, 1987

In June, 1987, O.E.A. again provided program facilitators with two types of rosters with which to provide update information:

1. a preprinted computerized roster of all participants in the fall, 1986 A.I.D.P. program, including those admitted on or after November 1. Facilitators at all schools indicated whether, when, and why any of these students were discharged from the program. At non-computerized schools, facilitators also provided spring, 1987 course and credit information; for computerized schools, this information was obtained centrally.

2. blank roster forms for students added to A.I.D.P. during the spring, 1987 term. At all schools, facilitators provided biographical data, date of entry into the program, whether the student was in the core or transitional group, and baseline attendance, course, and credit information. At non-computerized schools, facilitators also provided 1985-86 course and credit information; for computerized schools, this information was obtained centrally.

The file created from these data was then matched to the spring, 1987 Biofile to supplement and correct the information provided by A.I.D.P. facilitators; to the attendance subsystem of the Biofile to obtain 1985-86 and 1986-87 attendance data; to the spring, 1987 Bilingual Education Student Information System (BESIS) file to identify students who were classified as limited English proficient (LEP); to fall, 1986 and spring, 1987 citywide

reading test score tapes; and to winter, 1986 and spring, 1987 math Regents Competency Test (R.C.T.) score tapes. The resulting file was then merged with the previously created master file to create the final tape containing all available information on each of the A.I.D.P. participants during the 1986-87 school year.

REST OF SCHOOL INFORMATION

Whenever possible, central file data were collected for all students enrolled in A.I.D.P. high schools to provide a source of comparison with A.I.D.P. participants. Central file data available for the entire school included 1985-86 and 1986-87 attendance, BESIS and math and reading and test score data. In addition, courses passed and failed and credits earned were available for all students in computerized high schools.

Appendix D

School By School Summary of Students Served and
Those with Complete Attendance, Course, and Credit data

	STUDENTS IN PROGRAM		ATTENDANCE[a]		COURSES PASSED[a]		CREDITS[b]	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BOAR	2,864	54.5[c]	1,737	60.6[d]	1,225	42.7[d]	2,416	84.4[d]
Automotive	164	3.1	49	29.8	48	29.2	111	67.6
Boys and Girls	139	2.6	62	44.6	35	25.1	115	82.7
Bronx Regional	99	1.9	9	9.0	19	19.2	93	93.9
Curtis	194	3.7	149	76.8	123	63.4	177	91.2
Evander Childs	180	3.4	108	60.0	82	45.6	137	76.1
Franklin K. Lane	176	3.3	147	83.5	111	63.1	155	88.0
George Washington	223	4.2	147	65.9	99	44.4	178	79.8
George Wingate	167	3.2	126	75.4	70	41.9	142	85.0
James Monroe	170	3.2	94	55.2	70	41.2	157	92.3
John F. Kennedy	178	3.4	138	77.5	97	54.5	159	89.3
Martin L. King, Jr.	194	3.7	145	74.7	102	52.6	156	80.4
Park West	182	3.5	125	68.6	63	34.6	143	78.5
Sarah J. Hale	213	4.1	120	56.3	84	39.4	176	82.6
Walton	197	3.7	89	45.1	74	37.6	168	85.2
Washington Irving	203	3.9	146	71.9	86	42.3	184	90.6
W. Bryant	185	3.5	83	44.8	62	33.5	165	89.1
STRATEGIES	1,167	22.3	650	55.6	418	35.8	913	78.2
Adlai Stevenson	199	3.8	154	77.3	121	60.8	167	83.9
A. Jackson	161	3.1	91	56.5	70	43.5	145	90.0
C. Columbus	162	3.1	58	35.8	45	27.8	110	67.9
Julia Richman	196	3.7	112	57.1	92	46.9	171	87.2
Lower E. Side	86	1.6	66	76.7	17	19.8	71	82.5
Morris	169	3.2	73	43.1	43	25.4	89	52.6
Seward Park	194	3.7	96	49.4	30	15.5	160	82.4
OPERATION SUCCESS	1,223[e]	23.2	786	64.4	613	50.1	970	79.3
DeWitt Clinton	474	9.0	333	70.2	288	60.8	415	87.5
Erasmus Hall	448[e]	8.5	279	62.8	182	40.6	311	70.0
Lafayette	301	5.7	174	57.8	143	47.5	244	81.0
TOTALS	5,254	100.0	3,173	60.4	2,256	42.9	4,299	81.8

[a] These numbers represent all students for whom there were four terms of data.

[b] These numbers include all students with a valid grade code and data related to total number of credits accumulated after the program year.

[c] Percent refers to column total.

[d] Percent refers to line total.

[e] This total includes four students who were identified as participating in Erasmus High School's G.E.D. program.

Appendix E

School By School Summary of Attendance and Achievement Improvement Using Complete Data[a]

MODEL	ATTENDANCE IMPROVED N	ATTENDANCE IMPROVED %	COURSES PASSED IMPROVED N	COURSES PASSED IMPROVED %	CREDITS ENOUGH TO ADVANCE N	CREDITS ENOUGH TO ADVANCE %
SOAR	681	39.2	579	47.3	529	21.8
Automotive	20	40.8	15	31.3	9	8.1
Boys and Girls	26	41.9	20	57.1	14	12.2
Bronx Regional	3	33.3	10	52.6	10	10.8
Curtis	65	43.6	67	54.5	48	27.1
Evander Childs	47	43.5	42	51.2	49	35.8
Franklin K. Lane	59	40.1	62	55.9	60	38.7
George Washington	46	31.3	63	63.6	38	21.3
George Wingate	65	51.6	31	44.3	23	16.2
James Monroe	35	37.2	22	31.4	37	23.6
John F. Kennedy	59	42.8	52	53.6	40	25.2
Martin L. King, Jr.	55	37.9	42	41.2	54	34.6
Park West	55	44.0	25	39.7	17	11.9
Sarah J. Hale	52	43.3	38	45.2	52	29.5
Walton	29	32.6	33	44.6	23	13.7
Washington Irving	46	31.5	40	46.5	28	15.2
W. Bryant	19	22.9	17	27.4	27	16.4
STRATEGIES	266	40.9	159	38.0	252	27.6
Adlai Stevenson	53	34.4	35	28.9	51	30.5
A. Jackson	46	50.5	24	34.3	54	37.2
C. Columbus	24	41.4	24	53.3	17	15.5
Julia Richman	49	43.8	44	47.8	51	59.8
Lower E. Side	32	48.5	1	5.9	40	56.3
Morris	25	34.2	20	46.5	27	30.3
Seward Park	37	38.5	11	36.7	12	7.5
OPERATION SUCCESS	326	41.5	278	45.4	257	26.5
DeWitt Clinton	111	33.3	109	37.8	109	26.3
Erasmus Hall[b]	145	52.0	104	57.1	79	25.4
Lafayette	70	40.2	65	45.5	69	28.3
TOTALS	1,461	46.0	1,016	45.0	1,038	24.1

[a]These numbers represent all students for whom there were data, regardless of their length of participation in the program.

[b]This total includes four students who were identified as participating in Erasmus High School's G.E.D. Program.

Appendix F

Attendance Mean for Attendance-Eligible Core and Transitional Students by 1985-86 Mean Attendance Interval[a]

1985-86 Attendance Interval	CORE				TRANSITIONAL			
	Full Year		Part Year		Full Year		Part Year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-10	5	53.5	2	21.1				
11-20	12	40.4	14	39.9			2	19.0
21-30	19	41.3	21	31.1	3	41.2	7	35.9
31-40	27	54.2	45	37.7	7	57.2	8	37.2
41-50	65	58.1	43	39.8	16	57.6	11	42.4
51-60	120	63.1	74	47.0	43	58.7	31	42.1
61-70	193	66.0	99	49.1	113	63.7	58	54.5
71-80	243	71.3	124	57.5	161	70.9	72	54.9
81-90	151	76.1	127	64.8	168	72.6	81	66.7
91-100	31	80.9	48	68.0	92	84.4	25	68.9
Totals	866		597		603		295	

[a] These data do not include students in Operation Success Schools.